BIBLIOTHÈQUE VERTE

INDIANA JONES™ Jr
ET LE TRIANGLE DES BERMUDES

Story & Original French Text
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Translation & Lore Adjustments
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Young Indiana Jones and The Bermuda Triangle

(Indiana Jones Jr. et Le Triangle Des Bermudes)
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A second English translation, this one with minor adjustments for Indiana Jones lore

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Chapter 1

The Lake, Central Park, New York, September 1913

The sweltering embrace of the afternoon sun had surrendered to a light, fresh and crisp breeze. Across the tranquil waters of Central Park Lake two gondolas glided as if one with the air. Professor Henry Jones and his son's friend Herman observed with a mix of curiosity and relief as Indiana Jones and the stunning Norma Bellini drifted by, lost in a world of their own. The two obviously were enjoying the peace after finishing an adventure that ripped across New York State. They had delivered gangsters into the custody of the New York police after an adventure that went from from the thunderous roar of Niagara Falls to the dizzying heights of the Empire State Building.

A trail of danger and near-death experiences, even above average for them, had marked their journey. It made this moment of serenity all the more precious to everyone involved.

"Whew!" Herman exhaled with a convincing pantomime of a deflating balloon. "I'm glad to see the end of this whole mess. I hope never to cross paths with those crooks again. I have to admit I wasn't too sad to see 'Snorky' go into the falls. Did anyone catch his real name when the police were hauling him away?"

"Something Italian sounding," Professor Jones replied, a thoughtful frown creasing his brow. "My

guess is those guys will not remain behind bars for long. The underworld has a way of finding its own and I have a feeling I'll see 'Snorky' again. I watched a gangster named Sammy Fortune debase himself to unimaginable levels and still return to the tables one time when I got stuck in Reno on a train trip home to Utah."

Indy was rowing his boat close enough to shore to overhear. He knew there was something a little harder and more cunning in his latest rival. He agreed with Herman and wished he had caught the real name. Record keeping was getting better with police and his father had pen pal connections with the famed Falfa law enforcement family. Robert Falfa was a famous turn of the century sheriff in California, and also turned out to be an avid reader of medieval history.

Herman, always jittery unless eating, could only dream of returning to his peaceful Utah home. He was willing to row a gondola if need be, but was quite content to chat with Indy's dad on shore at the moment. Meanwhile, Indy's focus was singular and charmed. He had taken up the oars and was supposed to be navigating, but his gaze remained fixed on Norma. Her beauty and spirit had long cast a spell over him. Central Park Lake was abuzz with activity, amateur sailors flitted about, each navigating with polite nods and genteel waves. None of it mattered to Indy, he struggled to make sense of his feelings. He was fourteen years old and just loved to

just breathe the same air as her. All seemed well in this picture-perfect afternoon until a floating ball of chaos threatened to disrupt the calm.

On a neighboring gondola a lanky youth just a little older than Indy with thick glasses and a wild look in his eyes flailed his arms energetically. Beside him stood a daughter of a family friend of the senior Jones, one Cornelia Postlethwaite. Her elegant form and solidly furrowed brow contrasted sharply with the sloshing chaos of their boat. Neither had the balance to stand in a boat.

Indy's father had run into another old friend that morning, Dr. Sanchez-Villalobos Ramírez was both Fencing coach and Professor of Spanish Linguistics at Columbia University. He had connected the group for the afternoon boat excursion. Professor Jones, Woody and Cornelia arrived early, and Woody strategically suggested he and Cornelia row out first. Indy and Norma arrived just as Woody ported their boat out.

"Watch out, Woody!" she chirped in a high-pitched warning not long after launch. "This fellow doesn't seem to be much of a navigator …unlike you my dear Mr. Smith …"

Woody Smith had been working to promote himself as the "Airman Inventor" in the New York press. He turned with a look of deep pride at his beloved Cornelia, he loved how she slow-blinked at him with

anxious yet adoring eyes.

"Don't look at me, Woody," Cornelia urged. "If you don't do something, we're going to collide!"

In a frenzy, Woody began gesticulating wildly. "Ahoy, you there! Watch where you're going!"

Professor Jones, garbed in a striking blue suit with a bright yellow waistcoat and a flamboyant red bow tie, was apoplectic. "Junior! Are you intent on drowning these women?"

On the surface the venerable professor often looked as though he had stepped out of a Jules Verne novel. On the inside he was more often exasperated by his son's penchant for entangling himself in complex predicaments.

"Junior! JUNIOOOR! Did you learn nothing from the iceberg!?!" Professor Jones bellowed, his frustration echoing over the water.

Oblivious to the commotion around them, Indy and Norma remained enraptured in their own world. It was inevitable that if their gondola would slam into another it would be Woody and Cornelia's with a jarring crack, sending shockwaves through the vessel. Indy had unwittingly made one long hard row of the oars just before collision.

"By God! Indy! What have we done?!" Norma cried,

her voice laced with panic as she sprang to her feet.

The gondola lurched dangerously. Norma clung to Indy's shoulders, causing him to lose his balance. There was a brief moment where Indy tried to appreciate her grasp and that moment tipped them both into the water.

"Be careful!" Professor Jones shouted. "This isn't some stable seagoing barge!"

"Woody, do something!" Cornelia screamed, her arms flailing in desperation. "We're going to—"

A resounding splash cut her off. For a fleeting moment, the lake was calm, only to be disrupted by the heads of Indy and Norma breaking through the surface. As the drenched duo resurfaced, the professor's irritation was palpable.

"Indy and Norma in the pond," he muttered, turning to Herman. "Perfect. Perhaps they can lunch with the swans?"

Indy's Stetson floated by, its owner seemingly indifferent. His first instinct was to aid Norma, who, with her hair plastered to her face, looked more like a drowned siren than the glamorous woman who had once graced the Klondike like an onyx haired goddess.

"I'm at a loss," Indy stammered, wiping water from

his eyes. “I... I don’t know where my head was…”

“I know where,” Norma replied with a wry smile. “It’s always in the clouds…”

“Yeah, that’s probably it,” Indy resistant to disagree, his usual confidence shaken by the influence of his feelings.

Cornelia, lying flat in her gondola, looked at Indy with a mixture of sympathy and frustration. “Your naval luck follows you, young sir.”

“I’m with you on that,” Indy mumbled, shivering. “Dry land is all I desire from now on.” Indy had survived the sinking of the Titanic the previous year with his longtime tutor Helen Seymour.

A booming voice that shot across the lake caught Indy’s attention. “Junior, shame on you! Your grandfather and great-grandfather served in the Scottish Navy! This is now your second boat disaster!”

This was the last straw. Indy’s patience snapped. He was the one who almost died in the North Atlantic and his dad needed to leave that alone. “What can I do if these cheap gondolas don’t stay afloat? And for heaven’s sake, Dad, I’ve told you a hundred times not to call me Junior!”

“Enough bickering,” Norma interjected. “Indy, you should make introductions.”

"I'm Norma Bellini," she said, extending her hand to Cornelia.

The gondolas drew close. Indy's father docked their boat next to Woody's, a gesture of diplomatic courtesy.

"Greetings all," he announced with a dignified air. "This is my son Henry, and this is his friend Herman Mueller. Delighted to meet you, even under these unfortunate circumstances."

"Charmed, Professor," she turned towards Indy and Norma. "I'm Cornelia Postlethwaite, and this is my… friend, Woodrow Smith. Woody is an aviator with dreams of crossing the Florida Straits. He's a fearless adventurer," Cornelia introduced him with a mix of pride and apprehension.

Woodrow Smith bowed to Norma and shook hands with Indy and Herman. "We should move on. Our hotel is in Little Italy, and if I'm right, it's quite a trek. Norma will catch her death of cold if we dawdle."

Cornelia and Woody exchanged concerned glances. "We wouldn't allow it," Cornelia said kindly. "I'll take you to my family's place. It's at The Belnord on West 86th street, just two blocks from the park. Norma can dry off and borrow something of mine."

Indy's spirits sank. His romantic plans to get Norma alone in a lovely setting had been thwarted by this unforeseen fact of unwanted kindness.

"It's very kind of you," Professor Jones said with surprising ease, without consulting Norma or his son.

"Among polite society we are both delighted and obligated." Cornelia laughed.

Ten minutes later, the group made their way through Central Park toward the Postlethwaite residence, the first hints of autumn rustling through the trees.

"Professor, you mentioned your ancestors defended Scotland?" Cornelia began as they crossed Fifth Avenue. "I too have British roots. I've even heard tales of royal blood, though I'm a little skeptical. My good genes make me wonder, though."

Indy turned to Herman, whispering, "This woman is more tiresome than rowing a boat. Brains matter, not blood."

The mention of blood made Herman jittery, his thoughts straying to past traumas. He nervously scanned the surroundings, hoping the Mafia's black cars weren't lurking nearby looking for revenge. In reality they were walking by some amazing new townhouses designed by famed architect Henri Fouchaux.

Professor Jones responded politely, "Young lady, I'm sure the royal family would welcome you as their cousin. But tell me, Woodrow—can I call you Woodrow? Cornelia mentioned you have some ambitious aeronautical plans?"

"That's right," Woody replied with enthusiasm. "Louis Bleriot crossed the Channel. I plan to surpass that, aiming for the Florida Straits, and then the Atlantic!"

"The Atlantic?" Herman gasped in admiration. "I just want to return to Utah."

Indy listened, captivated by Woody's audacious dreams. "Impressive," Indy thought. "I wonder what else is in store."

Woody winked at Indy, "I'm not just chasing adventure. I hope to impress Cornelia. I want to marry her, but she's hesitant about a penniless dreamer. This flight could change that."

"I understand," Professor Jones said thoughtfully. "Such a feat would indeed capture the attention of the aviation world and bring you considerable reward and investors."

"You read my mind, Professor," Woody replied with a grin.

As the group approached The Belnord, both Indy and his father were impressed with the architecture and general sense of modern luxury.The building was built in Italian Renaissance Revival style and was currently bathed in the amber glow of the setting sun. Indy took a moment to think of the wider situation. The grandeur of the building suggested that the future groom would need more than just ambition to cover expectations and expenses of an apartment in The Belnord after the wedding.

"Poor Woody," Indy mused. "His troubles are far from over."

There was something in Woody that Indy really liked, and at the moment the two had similar goals in trying to impress women they cared about. Indy's generous spirit sparked a glimmer of an idea. He might just find a way to help, and perhaps escape his father's expectations in the process. He'd have to tread carefully, but the opportunity was too enticing to ignore.

Chapter 2

The resistance grows

The grand opulence of the Postlethwaite apartment was based on the Louis XVI style used throughout the building. The evening shimmered with an air of high society as Professor Henry Jones stepped into a treasure trove of generations of handed down antiquities. His eyes sparkled with delight as he admired priceless masterpieces, ancient relics, and a grand piano where the legendary Frederic Chopin himself had once performed his complete Nocturnes. The Postlethwaites knew the architects personally and supposedly had the largest apartment, although technically they co-owned the building. Followed by "The Folgers," they were the longest residents of The Belnord. Herman wondered if he should know who the Folgers are.

"Professor, would you care for a cup of tea?" Mrs. Winifred Postlethwaite's voice, laced with a hint of reverence, cut through the opulence of the room. She extended the offer with a curtsy that seemed to suggest she was in the presence of royalty. "It is truly an honor to welcome you. The Metropolitan Museum owes much of its grandeur to your scholarship. Isn't that right, Marmaduke?"

Mr. Marmaduke Postlethwaite, a stately gentleman in his sixties with graying hair and a pair of bushy eyebrows that hinted at a storied past, appeared as though he had stepped straight out of an imperial

regiment. However, his deafness rendered him somewhat of a figure of comedic relief, often requiring his wife to shout in his ear.

"Isn't that right, Marmaduke?" Mrs. Postlethwaite reiterated, her voice echoing off the ornate walls.

Mr. Postlethwaite, momentarily confused, mumbled, "Professor Jones took the metro? That's quite the notion! We prefer our motorcar, Winifred and I."

In this newly built theater of old-world charm, Henry Jones decided to dive into a topic outside his research area, yet still stirred his scholarly heart. Professor Jones loved the wider context of the evening thoroughly. Knowing his old friend Marmaduke couldn't hear a word of it he was free to re-tell any story any way he liked, a true treat.

"Madam, I can sense your refined taste is untouched by fleeting fads. May I inquire about your opinion on the First Manifestation of contemporary European art currently showcased at the Armory Show on 25th Street?"

At the mere utterance of the show's name, Mrs. Postlethwaite's face fell into a dramatic swoon, as though struck by a revelation of calamity.

"It is... a scandal," she whispered with the gravity of one announcing a personal betrayal. "Pornographic attack on decency…"

Mr. Postlethwaite's eyes, however, took on a lascivious glimmer. "You mean the 'Nude Descending a Staircase' by Marcel Duchamp?" His tone was almost too casual, too positive. "I find viewing it rather invigorating, wouldn't you say, Professor?"

Henry Jones's reaction was immediate. He was unbothered by the painting and definitely didn't want any further hints of how it stirred arousal in Mr. Postlewaite. He fixed his gaze on his teacup, swallowed the contents in a single gulp, and sought to change the subject.

"This is an exciting development," Indy chimed in, he was trying to ignore the adults talking about oil paintings of abstract nudies by reading a newspaper article about The Lark of Duluth, a newly established commercial flight line over Duluth Harbor. "Mr. Wilson mentioned plans to cross the Florida Straits. I find the notion rather daring. We would be honored to assist him in Miami."

The impact of Indy's proposal hit Professor Jones like a thunderclap. Tea nearly exploded from his mouth, and his elaborate red bow tie snapped loose in the commotion.

"By the heavens! I... I'm so embarrassed," stuttered the professor, his face reddening to match his bow tie.

“Professor Jones, don’t worry yourself. Boyish enthusiasm is good,” Mrs. Postlethwaite offered with an unsettlingly serene smile.

Woodrow Smith, eager to smooth over the disturbance, offered, “It would be a pleasure to have you accompany us to Miami. What do you say?”

Caught in a whirlwind of conflicting emotions, Henry Jones hated the decision so casually put in front of him in front of his son. His scholarly obligations loomed, but the opportunity to witness what undoubtedly would be history urged him to embrace this unexpected opportunity.

“What do you say, Dad?” Indy prodded, a glint of rebellion in his eye. “Wasn’t there talk of visiting a friend in Florida? Montand... or Monblanc? The man who constructed the bridge between the city and Miami Beach?”

Professor Jones frowned, his scholarly routine rattled. “Indeed, but I came to study a manuscript and we should have returned days ago. Missing more school is not an option.”

“I don’t want to miss school either,” Herman piped up timidly, casting a worried glance.

“Well, I defer to you, Professor,” he mumbled, more resigned than resolute.

Henry Jones announced with finality, "We will go to Florida. Final decision!"

Indy's eyes gleamed with triumph. "What!?!" he agreed with a huge smile.

"And I regret the loss of more time away from my beloved Utah," Herman added, his wistful tone betraying his unease. Indy's dad never missed a chance to visit old friend and scholar Mary McLeod Bethune of Daytona Beach, the boys had no idea. He made sure their train trip had enough of a stop over to see her.

The train ride to Miami was a spectacle of its own. Professor Jones brooded over ancient texts, while Herman indulged in the culinary delights left behind by Mrs. Postlethwaite. Indy and Woodrow engaged in animated discussions about aviation, while Norma and Cornelia's incessant chatter filled the air.

"You built a plane yourself?" Indy asked in awe.

"Yes, but it's a seaplane," Woodrow clarified, as though the distinction was obvious.

"A seaplane?" Indy's curiosity piqued. "Designed to sail and fly?"

"No, more designed to take off and land on water," Woodrow explained with a chuckle. "If there's a mechanical issue halfway to the Bahamas, a nor-

mal plane would spell disaster. This plane has both wheels and floats. I drew inspiration from Glenn Curtiss's seaplane, which I witnessed firsthand in 1911. With a stronger engine, success is all but assured."

Woodrow leaned closer, a conspiratorial whisper in his voice. "You see, Indy, my plane has two seats. I'm looking for someone brave enough to accompany me. It's a matter of safety."

Indy's eyes widened. "You need an assistant and haven't found anyone yet?"

"Exactly," Woodrow confirmed.

"An experienced professional who doesn't need to return to school on Monday?" Indy suggested with a hint of mischief.

Woodrow nodded. "Exactly."

Indy's resolve hardened. "Well, I think I'll join you in the crossing if you will have me."

Professor Jones, absorbed in his Crusades manuscript, did not initially react. After a few moments of contemplative silence, he looked up, his glasses glinting in the lamplight. He spoke as if to give the least amount of effort possible. A tactic designed to defuse debate. "It is out of the question, Junior."

The room fell silent, the tension palpable. Indy, undeterred, readied himself for the inevitable clash. Woodrow's encouraging nudge was all the push he needed.

"Want to make History, Indy?" Woodrow whispered. "A few hours of courage means being in history forever."

With a deep breath, Indy turned to his father. "Dad, I need to accompany Woodrow in crossing the Florida Straits."

Professor Jones, unyielding as ever, resumed his reading. "It-is-out-of-the-ques-tion, Junior."

This adventure had begun like so many with his father, what Indy's studies on Chinese described as zìxīang máodùn (矛盾). The unstoppable spear versus the impenetrable shield.

Chapter 3

Of oysters, shells and... a ghost

Unbeknownst to Indiana Jones, Herman Mueller's lips curled into a slight smile, his eyes twinkling with malicious satisfaction that Woodrow might need to find another co-pilot. The old professor's stern resolve had cast a shadow over the young adventurer's spirit. It was high time Indy had a boundary set! Hadn't he played enough with fate? Wasn't he weary of the endless chases and the breathless encounters with danger? Herman, on the other hand, was reaching his limit, teetering on the brink of his own breaking point. He secretly fantasized about spearheading a movement for beleaguered youths oppressed by their daring best friends.

"From the moment we leave this train until we reach the hotel," Professor Jones declared, his voice as cold and unyielding as granite, "you will not stray more than an inch from my side, Junior."

Herman, who had been idly sipping his milk, choked on the very thought.

"Indy you understand you can't talk your way out of a 500 foot fall right?" Herman's mind reeled. Indy was both his protector and primary source of anxiety. However he knew without Indy, lesser adventures had yielded far worse results. He remembered life before Indy came to Utah. He broke his left arm twice and been bitten by a snake the summer before

Indy showed up. Herman had to act, he felt had to intervene on behalf of Indy's father and common sense.

"Uh... surely Indy would never disobey, right Indy?" Herman's voice trembled as he pleaded. "Eh? You wouldn't, would you?"

"No, he would not," the professor assured, his gaze as sharp as a hawk's. "He told me this very morning, 'Ultimately, of the two of us, it's you who have the most sense.' He must remember that, right Junior?"

Behind his round spectacles, Henry Jones's eyes bore into his son's defiant pout. The boy kept his head low, resisting the probe of his father's unyielding stare.

Upon their arrival in Miami, the party checked into the Royal Palm Hotel. Woodrow's abode was far too modest to accommodate them all, and it wouldn't do for Cornelia to share a roof with her betrothed. Conveniently, the Royal Palm stood a mere stone's throw from the station. Professor Jones, Herman, Norma, Cornelia, and perhaps Indy were to take up residence there. The professor had no intention of stirring up a fuss in the opulent hotel. He yearned instead to retreat to Woodrow's "dingy hangar" out in the middle of nowhere.

At the hotel, Professor Jones began assigning rooms with all the pompous flair of a military general. The

best view for the ladies, the smallest for the "children," and the grandest for himself, naturally. All his lofty talk of sacrifice seemed to evaporate in the Miami heat.

Indy was itching with anticipation. Woodrow had announced that the seaplane's big adventure, marketed widely as a chance to see history, was set for the following noon. The night before he had made sure final pieces of his mechanical marvel were oiled and in place. Woodrow was buzzing with excitement. He had tinkered with the engine, blending past patents with his own innovations. If successful, he planned to patent his design. In what seemed like moments after waking Woodrow dashed to his hangar, driven by the lure of adventure and the ominous storm warning for the next day.

At their lunch, Indy remained conspicuously silent, while his father kept a hawk-like watch. Herman was tasked with keeping a close eye on "Junior," and any sign of defection was to be immediately reported. The thought of returning to Utah Scout camp telling everyone Indy had died in a plane mishap saddened Herman, and he was determined not to let this happen.

At precisely 4:30 Indy set out to visit Norma. The moment Indy slipped out of sight Herman leapt into action, scurrying to inform Professor Jones. He was promptly berated and ordered to return to his "chaperoning" post.

At 5:45 Indy emerged, arm-in-arm with Norma. "We're going to get some fresh air, Hermie. Better report to Dad," Indy said with a hint of defiance.

Herman wavered, torn between reporting the escapade or following the lovebirds. Herman made the wrong choice, only to be scolded by the professor for failing his task and losing Indy. He vowed to stick closer next time.

When Indy returned with Norma just before dinner, the professor was momentarily placated. "Bravo, Junior. I see I can trust you," he remarked, a note of reluctant approval in his voice. Indy nodded, but beneath the obedient exterior lay a secret plan that, if successful, would test his father's composure in an entirely new way.

Dinner was a lively affair. Cornelia raved about the Apalachicola oysters, and Indy, ever the provocateur, made a cheeky comment about the server's experience with other kinds of oysters. The professor barked an admonishment, and Indy, though chafing, complied with the request to apologize. The meal continued with Herman indulging in a voracious feast, devouring oysters and fried clams with gusto.

"Sir... was hungry," the server remarked with bemusement. "If all customers were like him, we'd have made a fortune!"

The professor, footing the bill, decided against reprimanding Herman, who appeared as content as a well-fed Buddha.

"Tomorrow, I will visit my friend Igor Monblanc at his residence," Henry Jones announced as the meal concluded. "Indy, you will accompany me."

"Of course, Dad," Indy replied, though his tone held a note of insincerity. "Just let me know what time you plan to get up tomorrow morning."

The professor, now suspicious, raised an eyebrow. "And why do you want to know, Junior?"

"Why, Dad, so I can bring you your breakfast in bed," Indy replied, his innocent facade hiding a mischievous glint.

Professor Jones's suspicions were aroused. However at the moment he was preparing for an evening meeting a two faculty members from Collier University who had recently illustrated the translation works of Sir Richard Francis Burton and F.F. Arbuthnot. Dr Roger Klarvin and his wife Dr. Virginia Klarvin were in town on a tour for their book. Indy's father was supposed to meet them after their spa appointment and was obviously concerned he would be late.

As the professor settled the boys into bed he was confident his son would stay settled. Indy had other plans. Meanwhile Herman, the self-appointed night

watchman, sank into a deep slumber, Indy readied himself for the real adventure. His father's doubts only fueled his determination.

The following morning it was clear the professor had an interesting evening with the Klarvins. He was snoring loudly far past his normal wakeup time, and was still wearing his clothes from the previous evening, albeit with a mis-buttoned shirt. Indy didn't question it. As his dad snoozed on, Indy crept down to fetch breakfast. He delivered it, as promised, with a grin and darted away. By the time Henry Jones realized what was happening and began to search Indy was long gone. The hotel staff and bemused guests had little to offer in way of help.

When Indy finally appeared at his father's door, suitcase in hand, his fresh demeanor and innocent questions belied his true intentions.

"Have you finished your breakfast, Dad? When are we heading out? I'm eager to meet your friend."

Professor Jones, taken aback by Indy's nonchalant attitude, hesitated. "I haven't quite finished, but… hmm… would you like to join me?"

"That's kind of you, Dad, but I've already eaten. I've been up for over an hour, reading that book on the Crusades you recommended. It's fascinating. Indy had been reading a reprint of T.E. Lawrence's thesis, The Influence of the Crusades on European Military

Architecture—to the End of the 12th Century. Indy tapped the book and said to his dad "You know, I've got a crusade of my own planned."

"Really? What sort of crusade?"

Indy's eyes gleamed with the promise of mischief. "You'll see, Dad. It's a surprise. I'm not running away, just yet."

With that, Indy's plan set into motion, while Professor Jones was none the wiser, blissfully unaware of the adventure that lay ahead for his intrepid son.

Chapter 4

The Sea Hawk

At precisely 10 o'clock, with a level of excitement more appropriate for a kid on Christmas morning, Indy shook his friend Herman awake and stormed toward his father's chamber.

"Dad! It's time to go! When are we heading out?"

Henry Jones sr., more of an author than adventurer, was taken aback. His son, once notorious for his wild escapades, seemed to have traded interest in reckless pursuits for the excitement about the world of academia? Very suspect indeed. Why the feverish excitement over Igor Monblanc, the venerable septuagenarian expert on the Bayeux Tapestry?

"In an hour or two, son. I need to finish this chapter on St. Louis's death," Henry replied, his mind still mired in historical details.

"But Dad, you'll have all night to read! I'm bored stiff. If you want me to stay, you've got to keep me entertained!" Indy's voice was a blend of enthusiasm and desperation.

Henry Jones, grappling with the logic of his son's plea, relented. "Alright, give me fifteen minutes. Then meet me downstairs with Herman."

As the clock ticked down, Indy, fueled by restless

energy, began an impromptu Indian meditation exercise in the hotel hallway. His scheme—no, his grand plan—was unfolding beautifully.

Fifteen minutes later, the whole crew assembled downstairs, the ladies looking perfectly styled. A carriage awaited and whisked Professor Jones, Indy, Herman, and Norma off to Igor Monblanc's. The carriage would then continue to transport Cornelia, who had an appointment to bid Woodrow farewell. To minimize temptation for Indy and avoid rubbing salt into the wound, Professor Jones decided to spare himself the sight of the departure.

The Atlantic morning mist had dissipated, giving way to radiant sunshine. Professor Jones was eager to surprise Igor, an old friend he hadn't seen in over a decade. Meanwhile, the ladies chatted while Herman, dubbed "Chubby," indulged in a feast of donuts. He barely had time to choke down a dozen before Indy's voice cut through the indulgence.

"But soon, the oppressed and enslaved will rise against their masters!" Indy declared, his eyes alight with fervor.

As they crossed the historic wooden bridge linking Miami to Miami Beach, built in 1912 and still the largest of its kind, Herman's voice was muffled by a mouthful of donuts. "You're sure the pillars are strong?"

"Shut up and eat!" Indy snapped, his patience fraying. If he had been driving the horses, he would have made them really move beyond a trot. At this rate, he was sure they'd never make it in time.

Cornelia, ever the optimist, mused, "One can only marvel at and trust in human ingenuity. Take my Woody, for instance. I never told him, of course, but I think he's a bit of a genius!"

Norma, practical as ever, responded, "In that case, you should tell him."

"Oh no!" Cornelia protested, her affection evident. "If I told him, he'd start believing it, and then he'd become useless!"

As if the slow progress wasn't exasperating enough, the driver halted in the middle of the bridge. "Enjoy the view! What a gorgeous place to pause and reflect!" he exclaimed.

Indy, grumbling to himself about the molasses-slow pace of the day so far, watched as the professor began an unsolicited lecture on Miami's history during this unplanned pause. "By 1567, the Spanish established a base for treasure seekers. They had…"

Indy tuned out, resisted the urge to toss everyone into the water and commandeer the reins himself. After the professor's soliloquy the convoy lurched back into motion, and the journey proceeded with

fewer interruptions. By 11:15, they reached Igor Monblanc's doorstep.

"Well, this is where our paths diverge," Professor Jones said to Cornelia. "Please wish Woodrow the best of luck from me. I look forward to hearing about this daring attempt. Come along, everyone. We can't delay Cornelia any longer."

The two boys exited without a hitch, but Norma lingered.

"If you don't mind, I'd like to accompany Cornelia. I don't want to leave her alone. I'll catch up with you at the hotel in three days."

Professor Jones, relieved to be rid of Norma's presence for a while, agreed. He knew Junior had a fondness for the girl. He thought of how marrying an Italian-Indian hybrid would scandalize certain social circles.

With a heart full of excitement, Professor Jones began whistling as he walked up the driveway to Igor's house. He rang the doorbell and called out cheerfully, "Igor! Guess who's here! I wanted to surprise you!"

But surprise was not the word for what happened next. As the door swung open, Henry Jones turned to present his son and found him missing. He was greeted instead by Herman, who wished he could

vanish as fast as a Florida roach when the lights were turned on.

With mounting desperation, the professor raced down the dusty road toward Woodrow's hangar, ten miles away. Alas, he was too late. A dust cloud in the distance was all that remained of Indy's escape.

Betrayed by his own flesh and blood, Henry Jones trudged back to Igor's home, weighed down by a heavy heart.

Igor Monblanc, though sympathetic, could offer no immediate help. "I would have proposed we pursue with my carriage, but my poor beast has been ill. His horse, named "Shoelicker," apparently had eaten fermented grain. By the time we get to Smith's hangar, your son will have been airborne for hours!"

Meanwhile, Woodrow Smith, restless and excited, had spent the night dreaming of soaring over the Straits of Florida in his seaplane. He had gone over his checklist a hundred times and found a simple fix for his engine's hiccup, a shot of calcitic lime. Desperate problems often have the simplest solutions.

Seeing Cornelia, Indy, and Norma, Woodrow's joy was clear from head to toe. He embraced his beloved Cornelia, kissed Norma's hand, and turned to Indy. "So, my young friend? Are you coming with me or not?"

The Sea Hawk, Woodrow's trusty aircraft, rested silently at the dock. The sea was calm, the sky clear, and a gentle breeze played with Norma's hair.

"Of course I am!" Indy declared with enthusiasm. He felt a pang of guilt for leaving his father behind, but he was determined. If all went well, he'd be back by noon the next day, with a brief stop for refueling in the Bahamas and a planned overnight stay.

Professor Jones, meanwhile, would have to weather a storm of criticism upon Indy's return. At least, he hoped.

"I'll just do the final checks," Woodrow announced. "And frankly, I see no reason to delay any longer. So, Indy, suit up and climb aboard!"

Cornelia shivered at the thought of the voyage, while Norma, chin held high, expressed her own dreams of such an adventure. Indy quickly donned his protective suit and helmet, his heart pounding with excitement. He gave Norma a reassuring kiss on the forehead.

"Good luck, Indy. I'll await your return with bated breath. And remember—behave yourself!"

"Trust me, you know me!" Indy replied. And she did—perhaps too well. Norma, anxious, could not close her eyes for fear of what might come.

Woodrow explained the seaplane's takeoff procedure. "The plane must be positioned into the wind. I'll retract the water rudders, push the throttle to full, and pull back on the stick. When we're hovering, I'll push the stick forward to keep the floats from sinking. At the right moment, a gentle pull will lift us off."

"I hear you loud and clear," Indy said. "Let's go!"

From the shore, Cornelia and Norma watched as the Sea Hawk, a majestic bird, battled against the wind and skimmed the water. The plane picked up speed, heading toward its destination—the Bahamas, two hundred kilometers away. If Woodrow succeeded, his name would be etched in history.

If he failed … they would be etched into a dark streak on an island or drown.

The two women decided, in unspoken agreement, not to dwell on those possibilities.

Chapter 5

A Sudden Fog of Peril

After reaching altitude the Sea Hawk's engine purred a soothing melody beneath the blistering noonday sun, slicing through the azure sky with a defiant grace. Indiana Jones, perched in the back seat of the cockpit, felt the intoxicating rush of suspended existence caught in the liminal space between heaven and earth. It was a heady sensation of invincibility, as if he was a demi-god mastering the elements. But beneath this veneer of triumph lay a lurking peril. The sparkling sea below, so serene and inviting, concealed hidden dangers. Could such a vast expanse of water transform into a tomb in the blink of an eye?

"So how do you feel, kid?" Woodrow Smith's voice cut through the roar of the engine, turning his head to shout over the cacophony.

Indy's eyes gleamed with excitement. "I have never felt more like Tom Swift! It feels like I'm pioneering a new frontier, my ancestors explored on foot and by boat. A seaplane can go anywhere, a new world for mankind."

Woodrow nodded, a smile stretching across his face. "I understand. I've been dreaming of this expedition for years. Today, I finally feel like I've realized my true self. A pioneer of the new world."

Indy surveyed the vast expanse of sky and ocean,

the exhilaration of altitude making him feel like a master of the world. "I can only imagine what the Wright brothers felt during their first flight," Woodrow said, his voice brimming with wonder. "If we make it, this journey will be a game-changer!"

"We won't just be changed, we'll redefine what's possible," Indy added, his tone thoughtful.

Woodrow's eyes twinkled with excitement. "You know, Indy, I believe that in a century or two, we might even fly to the moon!"

Indy, ever the pragmatist despite his adventurous spirit, was skeptical. Jules Verne's fantasies seemed far from reality. But before he could voice his doubts, Woodrow's expression turned grim. "I am not so sure, you think humans are going to go up there like some sort of space oddity?"

Instead of an answer Woodrow shouted "Hold on!" His affect suddenly grew tense. "I wasn't prepared for this... The weather report didn't mention anything about…"

Indy's gaze darted outside. The once totally clear sky had been divided by a thick, impenetrable fog, rolling in like a ghostly tide. It looked like a wall in front of them as they entered "By God!" Indy exclaimed, seeing the fog's dense embrace.

Woodrow's face hardened as he gripped the con-

trols. "Once we go in we'll have to navigate using the compass."

"But where did this fog come from?" Indy's question was tinged with disbelief.

"There are two possibilities," Woodrow explained. "Either the water is warmer than the air, causing condensation, or a warm, moist air mass has moved over the colder ocean. I'm leaning toward the latter."

The Sea Hawk, quickly hurtling towards the massive wall of fog seemed to face limbo, an otherworldly realm where navigation and control could be lost in an instant. Fog so thick they could not see into it, and it loomed ahead at a scale that made it look like it had been put there by the gods.

"Cover your nose with your scarf," Woodrow advised. "And don't panic! This fog might be only a few hundred meters thick..."

Indy nodded, steeling himself for the encroaching darkness. The fog would be a brief passage. Soon, he hoped, the sun and the ocean would reappear in their full splendor.

"Brace yourself... we're entering the unknown in five... four... three... two... one."

The Sea Hawk plunged into the icy mist. Instantly, the familiar roar of the engine faded into an eerie

silence. The air grew frigid, and Indy shivered as the aircraft began to vibrate violently. The vibrations grew into alarming tremors. Moisture obviously impacting the engine's efficiency.

"Turbulence!," Woodrow said, his voice strained. "I regret not having an autopilot. Curtiss installed one last year, but I couldn't afford it."

"You mean you're not sure you can keep holding the stick?" Indy's concern was palpable.

"I'm sure, but it's going to be a struggle," Woodrow admitted.

As the minutes dragged on, the pea soup of fog extended far beyond their initial estimates, seemingly for kilometers. Indy's patience was wearing thin.

"How long have we been in this soup?" Indy asked, his teeth chattering.

"Twenty minutes, maybe twenty-five," Woodrow replied. "It's odd. No one predicted this. But there's something even stranger."

"What's that?" Indy's unease deepened.

"The compass is going haywire," Woodrow said. "It's like we're crossing a magnetic anomaly. For the last ten minutes, North keeps shifting positions. I've been correcting course to stay on track, but it's been

like chasing shadows."

Doubt gnawed at Indy. Maybe his father's cautious advice was worth heeding after all. Yet, the drive of discovery and progress kept him tethered to the dream. All he wanted now was to pierce through the fog and see daylight.

"Woodrow, any idea where we are? How far we've come?" Indy's voice was steady, though anxiety lurked beneath.

"Honestly, no," Woodrow confessed. "But we've got enough fuel for another hour or two. I'm confident the sky will clear up soon."

Indy's faith in Woodrow's "certainties" wavered. The situation was deteriorating rapidly. Suddenly, the Sea Hawk lurched as it lost altitude in a heart-stopping drop.

"Did we hit an air pocket?" Indy's voice was strained.

"No," Woodrow said grimly. "It's worse. We've got a power issue, probably with the fuel intake pipe. Moisture must be the culprit."

Their "certainty" evaporated into thin air. The engine sputtered, a sequence of hiccups followed by silence, then a desperate roar.

"I need to act," Woodrow said, his voice firm. "Oth-

erwise, we're doomed."

"Are you sure?" Indy asked.

"Absolutely," Woodrow said.

Indy braced himself as Woodrow described the precarious plan for landing in fog. It was a chilling prospect.

"The biggest challenge when landing on calm water with zero visibility is judging our altitude. Ideally, we'd be near a ship or buoy, but we have nothing. We'll descend as slowly as possible, praying the engine holds out. I've never attempted a glide landing under these conditions."

Indy swallowed his fear and maintained his composure. Woodrow's calm was the only anchor in the storm.

The Sea Hawk, buffeted by violent shakes, began its slow descent toward the invisible ocean below. The moment of truth was upon them. Would they find a safe landing strip—or become another lost tale in the annals of adventure?

As the aircraft fell through the fog, all that remained was to brace for the inevitable impact, praying that destiny's fickle hand would guide them to safety.

Chapter 6

Entrapment

They cleared the fog and the last of the moisture sputtered out of the engine. The Sea Hawk's engine purred like a contented beast beneath the blazing noon sun. All the moisture was a problem. Indy's newly found exhilaration had turned to ice-cold dread. The aircraft was descending at an alarming rate, a slow, currently uncontrolled descent into uncertainty. Woodrow, hunched over the controls, struggled with the stick, his face a mask of grim determination as he tried to pierce through the thickening mist.

The roar of the engine was abruptly silenced. The propeller ceased its ceaseless churn, and the cabin fell into a haunting, eerie quiet. The two had gotten used to yelling at each other to be heard over the engine. Indy's heart raced with a primal fear as the prospect of plummeting into the vast ocean below loomed ever closer. His life flashed before him in a chaotic montage, fierce battles with rival adventurers, laughter-filled moments with his beloved dog Indiana, memories of a mother lost too soon, and his thrilling escapades with his parents. France, India, China, and the wild Klondike flashed through his mind. Most poignant were thoughts of friends he had made around the world, he wanted to see Sallah again.

But then, Indy snapped back to reality. He had sur-

vived the sinking of the Titanic the previous year, an ordeal that had tested his resolve to its limits. He had lived through that frozen nightmare because he had never stopped believing. He had fought against even worse odds in other scrapes and prevailed. Now, faced with a new peril, he had to muster that same unwavering spirit.

"Woodrow?" Indy's voice cut through the silence, firm despite the fear gnawing at his insides.

"Yes, Indy, I'm here," came the despondent reply. The despair was palpable in Woodrow's voice, a stark contrast to the airman's usually upbeat demeanor.

"I trust you, Woodrow," Indy declared, his voice steady with conviction. "Norma thinks you're a genius. So do I. You've got to believe you can pull us through this. Focus and stay calm—we need you to think clearly!"

The words hit Woodrow like a bolt of lightning, reigniting a flicker of hope. For the first time since the engine's silence had condemned them to their precarious fate, Woodrow's mind sharpened. He ran through the mechanics of the fuel intake pipe, the source of their current plight. Could it be that the engine was simply flooded?

Desperation sparked a flash of brilliance. If the engine was indeed flooded, expelling the excess fuel might just be the key to restarting it. With a surge of

renewed purpose, Woodrow concocted a plan. He turned to Indy with a determined expression.

"I'm going to need to clear the flooded engine. It's risky, but it's our only shot. Stay put," Woodrow said.

"No," Indy countered, his resolve unshakable. "I'll do it. You stay where you are. I don't know how to handle these controls, but I can manage the propeller."

"No, Indy. It's too dangerous!" Woodrow protested.

"There's no other choice," Indy insisted. "We're probably just meters away from the ocean. This is our last chance!"

Without giving Woodrow another opportunity to stop him, Indy clambered from his seat. With the agility of a trapeze artist, he grasped the vertical struts and bracing wires, steadying himself as he reached the propeller. With a wince against the icy droplets of mist, he gave the propeller a forceful push.

"Ready, Woodrow? I'm trying again!" he shouted over the roar of the wind.

"Go for it. Five seconds. Four. Three. Two. One!" Woodrow's voice was a tightrope of hope and anxiety.

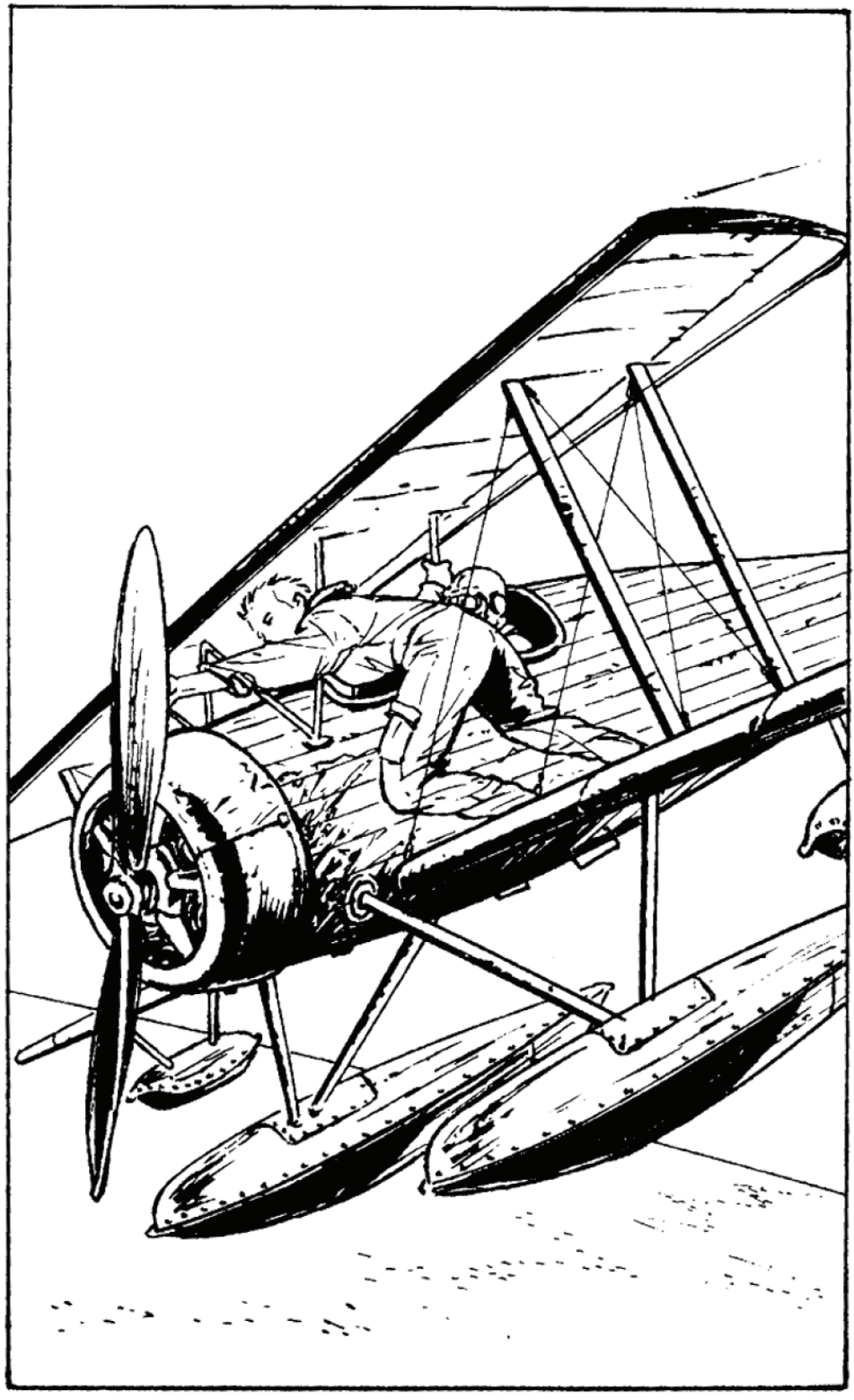
The propeller turned valiantly, nearly removing Indy's fingers on a quick second turn, making three fast revolutions before stalling. Indy's heart sank, but determination flared within him. He tried again with renewed vigor. This time, the engine roared to life, its powerful growl a triumphant declaration of life. Indy was reminded of all the belts and gears in that engine that would turn any caught body part to pulp, and wanted back in his seat.

"Quickly, Indy, get back to your seat!" Woodrow commanded, urgency etched into his voice. "The plane's unstable, its nose will tip on landing!"

Indy leaped back into his seat, the engine's growl now a comforting sound. The Sea Hawk steadied, the craft leveling out. Yet, as the mist began to thin, reality reared its terrifying head. They were perilously close to the water's surface, a mere four or five meters away. A bump on the stick would have sent them tumbling into the water. The sight of a hole in the fog revealed their precarious situation. A sudden explosion of fireworks from the front of the aircraft added to their crisis.

"What do we do now?" Indy cried, panic creeping into his voice.

Woodrow's face was a mask of grim resignation. "We're out of options. We have to land immediately."



Indy shut his eyes, bracing for impact as the Sea Hawk cut through the placid waters of the Florida Straits. The landing was rough, one float shook as it skidded precariously before stabilizing. As the plane skimmed the water Indy thought it looked like a delicate dance on the brink of disaster.

"Well done, Woodrow!" Indy cheered, clapping him on the back. "You didn't get us to the Bahamas, but you saved our lives. I'm grateful!" Indy knew any criticism of the plane's design should be saved for later.

Woodrow sat silently, his head bowed in a mix of failure and relief. After a long pause, he finally spoke. "Now we wait until the fog lifts… or until a boat runs us down."

Indy couldn't help but chuckle despite the tension. Woodrow's dark humor seemed oddly fitting. After hours of tense waiting, Woodrow's voice broke the silence. "The worst part is that I have no idea where we are. I hoped to avoid crossing the Bermuda Triangle."

"The Bermuda Triangle?" Indy's interest was piqued.

"You haven't heard of it?" Woodrow asked, surprised. "Many ships and planes have vanished in an area bounded by Bermuda, Florida, and Puerto Rico. The disappearances are unexplained, occurring in both good and bad weather. In 1814 the USS Wasp

and its 140 man crew disappeared without a trace. Even seasoned sailors like Joshua Slocum have been lost. It's rumored to be cursed or mysterious."

Indy eyed the encroaching fog warily. The thick pea soup might be the source of the many legends and disappearances. The longer it lingered, the more ominous it became. He had read about Slocum's disappearance, first guy to sail solo around the Earth. It was odd he had vanished.

"Tell me, Woody, may I call you that?" Indy asked, a touch of warmth in his voice.

"Sure, Indy," Woodrow replied.

"I've lost all sense of direction," Indy admitted. "We don't know where we are, how far we've traveled, or even the time."

Just then, Indy spotted a distant light through the fog. "Look over there! Do you see that light?"

Woodrow peered into the murky darkness. "I don't see anything."

"But there!" Indy insisted, pointing. "A pale light in the distance. Try to see it, Woody!"

"I still see nothing," Woodrow said, though he added thoughtfully, "It's reminiscent of the strange occurrences reported by Columbus' crew, compass fail-

ures, mysterious lights, and even a giant fireball."

Indy frowned. "A fireball could just be a setting sun, right?" He also had read real history on Columbus, Indy was not a fan of the man.

Woodrow's attention was elsewhere. "Do you hear that?" he asked, his expression alert.

"Hear what?" Indy questioned.

"That sound," Woodrow said, straining. "Like a whale's cry, sharp and plaintive."

Indy felt a shiver run down his spine. Between Woodrow's eerie tales and the mysterious sounds of the fog, the Bermuda Triangle was living up to its reputation for the uncanny.

Chapter 7
The Ball of Sharks

Two grueling hours ticked by as the dense fog stubbornly clung to the Sea Hawk. The aircraft bobbed like a toy boat on a tempestuous sea, drifting aimlessly under the whims of ocean currents.

"I'm beginning to think we'll be lost here forever!" Woodrow's voice cracked with despair, a stark contrast to his usual confidence.

Indy, however, was oblivious to the gloom. His sharp eyes scanned the horizon with unyielding determination. The dense mist had begun to thin, revealing a startling sight. Was it a mirage, a fevered hallucination borne from too many adventures and too little sleep? He always questioned his first ghost sighting as a kid in Maine, did he have a fever or something at the time.

"Hey, Woody! Do you see what I see?" Indy shouted, excitement brimming in his voice.

"What? Where? You still see that light?" Woodrow's confusion was palpable.

"No," Indy exclaimed, nearly vibrating with exhilaration. "I see LAND! LAND! We've reached our destination!"

"The Bahamas?!" Woodrow gasped, his voice a

mix of awe and relief. "We made it! I owe you, Indy. Without you, I'd be lost, still fighting with this damned engine."

Indy nodded, his modesty keeping him from boasting. Instead, he refocused on their predicament. "The next problem is simple. How do we get to the shore? Can you swim that far?"

Woodrow shook his head. "I can swim, but not that distance. Plus, I'm not abandoning the aircraft. We need it to get out of here."

"Looks like I'm your man," Indy said, resolute. "Time to dive in!" With a swift motion, he discarded his hat and plunged into the cold embrace of the ocean.

From the Sea Hawk, Woodrow watched with a mix of admiration and dread. Indy cut through the water with impressive strokes. But as he swam, a dark shadow emerged from the depths, a dorsal fin cutting through the waves with menacing speed.

A jolt of panic shot through Indy. The shark's fin drew closer, its silent approach a chilling promise of danger. Instinctively, he froze, barely moving, hoping to avoid attracting the predator's attention. The fin was perilously close now, five meters, four meters, three...

The shark circled him, a silent sentinel of death.

Indy's mind raced as he muttered desperate prayers. His chances of escape seemed slim, with the boat still a distant hope.

A sudden, sharp impact struck Indy's right hip. The shark had given him a brutal nudge. "Hey! I'm not a punching bag!" Indy thought, barely suppressing his panic. The beast continued its eerie dance, circling like a vulture.

Realizing he needed to act fast, Indy let out a guttural cry. "AHOY! CAN YOU HEAR ME? I'M BEING ATTACKED BY A SHARK! HELP!"

The shark, indifferent to Indy's pleas, persisted. But then—a miracle! Gunshots rang out from the approaching boat. BANG! BANG! BANG! The shark thrashed in agony, blood staining the sea.

Moments later, the boat, the Mary Celeste, reached Indy. A bearded man in a captain's hat and a crew of sailors pulled him aboard.

Exhausted and drenched, Indy turned to signal Woodrow, only to spot three more fins slicing through the water towards them with frightening speed.

"The one we shot wasn't a killer," a sailor said, his eyes grim. "But those three, they smell blood and haven't eaten in days."

"Yes, their friend's blood is a siren call," another added with a chilling note.

Indy's heart raced. "So, what are you going to do?"

The sailors exchanged determined glances. The captain gave a terse nod. The sailors fired three precise shots, sinking the menacing fins into the abyss.

Indy exhaled a long breath. "Gentlemen, I owe you my life!"

As the crew helped him aboard, the captain introduced himself. "Walter McDonald, explorer."

"Indiana Jones, adventurer," Indy replied with a sly grin.

McDonald chuckled. "Adventurer, huh? Tell me about these adventures."

Indy didn't miss a beat. "Pick your continent. I've faced down an evil gem in Egypt, narrowly escaped the bubonic plague, rescued Princess Tamar from her enemies in Georgia, survived the Titanic's sinking, and recently thwarted gangsters across New York. Care to hear more?"

The crew gazed in disbelief, unsure whether to laugh or be impressed.

"And you still have time to attend school?" McDon-

ald asked with a smirk.

"Indeed. The School of Life," Indy replied coolly. "Lots of time to read on the road. What about your explorations, Captain?"

McDonald's gaze turned shrewd. "We're studying plants from our expeditions. This island is a perfect retreat from civilization."

Indy raised an eyebrow. "I see."

"But enough talk," McDonald said, ushering them to the edge of the forest. "We'll take you back to land and tow your seaplane. By the way, would your friend be willing to teach me to fly that contraption of yours?"

That question flared Indy's suspicions. He didn't ask for a ride. There were obviously no police out here. McDonald's interest seemed less about aviation and more about something else entirely. The captain's overwhelming scent of rum hinted at a less-than-wholesome pursuit.

"What's your interest in Miami?" McDonald asked, a strange glint in his eye.

"We took off from Miami this morning," Indy replied, pride evident. "Two hundred kilometers nonstop, well, almost. Mechanical trouble and fog forced our emergency landing."

McDonald's interest piqued. "Miami, you say? That's intriguing."

Less than an hour later, Woodrow, Indy, and the Sea Hawk were back on solid ground. McDonald's sarcastic welcome faded as Roberto, a towering figure, led them to their quarters. Indy's curiosity about McDonald's motives and the mysterious island remained piqued.

Chapter 8

The Master of the Island

The night air hung heavy with the scent of salt and mystery. Shadows flickered in the glow of lanterns, and the restless ocean beat like a drum against the shore. Indy, soaked through and shivering from the evening chill, cast a wary glance at his companion, the ever-naive Woodrow Smith.

"It's really fortunate to have the captain and his men receive us," Woodrow sighed, his eyes drifting to the horizon. "Without them, we'd have been served up to the sharks."

"Perhaps," Indy replied, his voice low, "but you should note that McDonald's been eyeing your sea-plane like a buzzard circling a dying man. He even asked if you'd be willing to give him flying lessons! He is not asking for a ride. Why commit to learning if you plan on letting us leave? Once he takes off we can't get the plane back."

Woodrow chuckled, oblivious to the dark undertone in Indy's words. "I've no objection," he said cheerfully.

Indy looked to the heavens as if asking for patience. Woodrow, the brilliant airman, had his head in the clouds once again. "No objection?" Indy's voice sharpened. "Didn't you catch the scent of rum on him? The man reeks of it. You want him anywhere

near that cockpit?"

Woodrow blinked, surprised. "Really? I hadn't noticed. Well, I suppose he'll have to choose, either the bottle or my seaplane!"

Indy shuddered. The air was turning cold, and the night seemed to press in around them. "Until he makes that decision," Indy said, his voice lowering conspiratorially, "I think we should explore this island. It's got a strange feel to it, and I'd give anything to know its name."

"I'm not too worried about that," Woodrow said, rubbing his stomach. "I just hope they feed us soon. I'm starving, aren't you?"

Before Indy could reply, one of McDonald's men, a rough-looking sailor with a mouthful of decayed teeth, sauntered over. "Can I help you?" he asked, his smile dripping with false kindness.

"We'd like a bite to eat," Indy said, matching the man's tone. "We haven't had anything since this morning, and after today's adventure..."

The sailor's grin widened, showing more of his ruinous teeth. "Aye, follow me, gents. You'll be well fed."

Indy's instincts screamed at him to be wary. The Mary Celeste's crew had been nothing but friendly on the surface, but something dark lingered beneath

their smiles. The meal, a hearty stew of shark and a fermented drink called pulque, was as strange as their surroundings. McDonald regaled them with tall tales of his exploits in Burma and Nepal, all the while draining bottle after bottle of rum.

Woodrow, ever the gracious guest, raised his glass in thanks at the end of the meal. "A feast fit for a king," he declared. "Now, if you'll excuse us, we could use some rest."

Indy wanted to stay, to probe further into McDonald's history, but the captain, drunk and laughing, waved them off. "You're excused, my friends! Roberto will show you to your quarters."

The hulking figure of Roberto, a man more wardrobe than human, lumbered ahead of them. He led them back to their bungalow with a grunt and a quick "there," before disappearing into the shadows.

Indy's mind was racing. His father and their friends in Miami were surely worried sick by now. They were supposed to signal the Coast Guard upon arriving in the Bahamas, but this island, if it was even in the Bahamas, was shrouded in mystery. "Cornelia won't sleep a wink tonight," Indy muttered, watching Woodrow.

Woodrow's usual good humor faltered as reality set in. "You're right. We didn't alert anyone. And I doubt this island has any modern communication

equipment."

"I asked," Indy replied, "and they laughed. But we can't stay here. Tomorrow, you'll fix the plane, and we'll make our move."

Woodrow nodded and handed over a lantern. "Be careful, Indy. I mean it."

"I'll be fine," Indy said, gripping the lamp. The moon hung full and bright, casting eerie shadows across the island as Indy slipped outside. But just as his feet touched the sand, he froze, Roberto was standing there, watching.

The next day, the pair had little luck slipping away from their hosts. Woodrow busied himself with repairs while Indy kept a sharp eye on their every move.

By noon, Woodrow wiped his brow. "The plane's fixed, Indy. The fuel intake won't trouble us again."

"Well done, Woodrow," Indy said. "But McDonald's not going to let us go without a fight."

As if on cue, McDonald swaggered over, demanding his promised flying lesson. "No time like the present," he sneered, forcing Woodrow into the cockpit.

Indy watched from the shore, his heart pounding as McDonald fired up the engine. The Sea Hawk

rumbled to life, and despite Woodrow's protests, McDonald seized the controls. The plane shot into the sky, wobbling at first, then spiraling into a nose-dive. The sailors on the beach dove for cover as the seaplane roared overhead, Woodrow's cries echoing over the din.

But just as it seemed disaster was imminent, McDonald pulled up, leveling the plane and landing it with unexpected grace.

"Ha! Gave you all a fright, didn't I?" McDonald roared as he disembarked, his grin wide and wild.

Woodrow, disheveled and furious, stormed over. "You're never touching my plane again. Do you hear me?"

McDonald's eyes gleamed dangerously. "Oh, you're not going anywhere, my friends. Tonight, we celebrate. And you will join us."

Indy and Woodrow exchanged glances. The night ahead promised trouble, and they both knew it.

Chapter 9 xx
The Artificial Paradise

Indiana Jones and Woodrow Smith were beginning to feel like prisoners in paradise. "Do you get the same vibe?" Indy asked Woodrow after a lavish

lunch that was more of a feast than a mere meal. "It feels like we're in a probationary period, neither free nor truly confined."

"Least said about it, the better," Woodrow replied, meticulously polishing his glasses. "I'm starting to see your concerns from yesterday. Roberto has been glued to me while I worked on the engine, and Captain McDonald bombarded me with questions. Then he ignored my advice and tried to turn the skies into an impromptu stunt show."

"You didn't spill any beans, did you?" Indy inquired, a wary eye on their ostensible host's behavior.

"I did my best to keep our secrets," Woodrow assured.

Indy began to pace like a trapped animal within the confines of their bungalow. Roberto had once again escorted them there under the pretense of letting them "rest." But through the narrow window, Indy observed McDonald and two of his crewmen covertly examining The Sea Hawk, their curiosity palpable.

"They're planning a little soirée tonight to celebrate McDonald's birthday," Indy murmured to Woodrow. "From what I've gathered, they'll likely be so inebriated by nightfall that it'll give us the perfect opportunity to investigate. We'll need to pack our sleeping bags, compass, lantern, and some provisions, just in

case our return is delayed."

"What do you think they're up to on this island?" Woodrow asked, his curiosity piqued.

"I have no clue," Indy replied, determination set in his eyes. "But we're going to find out tonight."

As the sun dipped below the horizon, a festive energy swept across the island. A roaring bonfire illuminated the night, and Captain McDonald, dressed in his finest uniform, bellowed through the smoky haze. "Gather 'round, everyone! Tonight's my birthday, and the only rule is there are no rules! Let's celebrate!"

"I'd advise keeping your eyes peeled and making sure everyone's in high spirits—especially Roberto," Indy whispered, his gaze sharp.

"I'm on it," Woodrow confirmed, nodding with resolve.

The evening was marked by extravagant cuisine, grilled lobster curry, a delicacy McDonald had fallen in love with in Kenya, followed by swordfish prepared with a secret recipe by Marcelo, the Chilean cook. The array of spicy flavors almost made Indy forget their predicament.

"Our explorers have a taste for the finer things," Indy observed with a wry grin. "Better than what

we'd get at the Royal Palm Hotel."

Woodrow's expression clouded. Thoughts of their missing friends and anxious loved ones in Miami gnawed at him.

"Let's not get bogged down with worry," Indy advised. "We need to stay sharp and escape as soon as we can."

Deafened by the crew's raucous celebration, Indy strained to keep his focus. He knew their best chance was to uncover McDonald's true intentions. The alcohol had taken its toll on McDonald and his crew, with Roberto being the first to succumb, slumped over an empty bottle.

"The effects of liquor are quite the spectacle," Indy mused with a smirk. "Now's our chance, Woody. Let's go!"

Armed with their lantern, Indy and Woodrow embarked on their nocturnal exploration. Indy led them along the shore, hoping to find another means of escape, perhaps a hidden cove or bay. The dense foliage and steep terrain made progress slow and arduous.

"Maybe we should use a rope to climb up," Woodrow suggested, panting heavily.

Indy didn't respond. His focus was on reaching a

cliff that offered a sweeping view of the moonlit sea. After a grueling ascent, they finally reached their vantage point.

"This way," Indy directed. "Follow me."

Woodrow followed closely, eager to stay in Indy's wake. The second part of their trek was easier, as they descended a less steep incline. The moonlight guided them toward a surprising sight—masts swaying gently in the breeze.

"Look at that!" Indy whispered. "Another boat? They claimed to have none."

"Strange," Woodrow agreed. "And why anchor so far from camp?"

"That's exactly what we need to uncover."

As they crept closer, the number of masts revealed itself, a veritable forest of them.

"My God," Woodrow breathed. "It's like a boat graveyard!"

"Exactly," Indy confirmed. "I had a hunch something was off. They've kept this under wraps." He could hear his father's voice in his head explaining it actually was a boat cemetery because there is no boat church nearby. Ugh.

"What's our next move?" Woodrow asked, his nerves fraying.

"We keep going," Indy said firmly. "I'm certain the cove will be deserted at this hour, and I'm eager to uncover its secrets."

Reluctantly, Woodrow followed Indy down a path that led straight to the cove. The sight that greeted them was both eerie and enthralling, dozens of derelict boats strewn along the shore, their moonlit reflections casting an otherworldly glow.

"How could no one have noticed this before?" Woodrow wondered.

"This cove is hidden by dense vegetation," Indy explained. "From the sea, it's just a wall of greenery. Few boats come here and leave intact."

Suddenly, Woodrow gasped.

"Indy! Look! You won't believe this!"

"And yet, it's true," Indy said, peering where Woodrow pointed. On the bow of a wrecked three-masted vessel, the name "SPRAY BOSTON" was emblazoned in stark black letters.

"The Spray of Joshua Slocum?" Indy exclaimed. "This is incredible!"

Woodrow was transfixed. "It's like encountering a ghost from the past. The Spray was registered in Boston, Massachusetts. It set sail in 1909 for South America and never returned. After four years, the mystery was still unsolved." Or apparently not.

"At least for now," Indy said ominously. "It looks well-preserved—jib, mainsail, and spanker all meticulously rolled. It's as if the ship was recently in use."

Woodrow began examining the other wrecks—TIMBUKTU, PRINCESSE DE CLEVES, SKIMMER, BLACK PIRATE...

"My God," Woodrow murmured. "They all disappeared in the Bermuda Triangle..."

"In reality, they were captured here," Indy finished grimly. "Just as I feared."

Chapter 10

The Shadow of the Lost Fleet

A chill crept through the cove as Indy and Woodrow stood amidst the ghostly remains of countless vessels. The eerie moonlight cast long shadows over the derelict ships, their rotting hulls and tattered sails whispering tales of lost adventures. Indy's lantern flickered, casting an ethereal glow on the faded paint of the ships' names that once held pride of place on the high seas.

"We've stumbled onto something monumental, Woody," Indy said, his voice a hushed whisper. "'This is no ordinary shipwreck site. This is a mausoleum for the forgotten…to those who've been lost to the Bermuda Triangle's legendary grip."

Woodrow, his face pale and eyes wide with amazement, could hardly believe the sight before him. "Indy, if this is true, these ships should have been consigned to the depths of maritime mystery. How did they end up here, unscathed and seemingly preserved?"

"I have a theory," Indy replied, his gaze scanning the darkened landscape. "And it's a theory we need to confirm by probing deeper into this cove."

With renewed purpose, Indy led the way, their steps muffled by the soft, shifting sand beneath them. The lantern's beam illuminated a treacherous path,

winding through the skeletal remains of vessels that looked as though they were waiting for their final voyage.

As they ventured further, a new discovery caught their attention, a towering, weathered structure partially obscured by vines and creeping moss. It appeared to be a lighthouse, or at least what was left of one. Its walls were adorned with strange symbols and markings, adding to the mystery of the island.

"Look at that," Woodrow said, pointing towards the crumbling edifice. "It seems like a relic from another era."

"It's definitely not a recent construction," Indy mused, examining the archaic symbols. "These markings could be clues about the island's secrets or its purpose."

With bated breath, they approached the structure, pushing aside the thick undergrowth that concealed the entrance. The doorway, half-collapsed and shrouded in darkness, beckoned them to explore further. Inside, they found a dusty interior littered with old maritime equipment and a trove of maps and logbooks.

Indy's lantern revealed detailed charts and notes, some of which hinted at routes across the Atlantic, while others pointed to hidden treasure. One particular map caught Indy's eye. It depicted a series of

hidden coves and underwater passages, with cryptic annotations. These maps looked right at first glance, but Indy noticed similar errors on each one. The same error even on maps that seemed to be from different eras and places.

"These maps," Indy said, his voice charged with excitement, "could be the key to understanding why so many ships ended up here. It seems they weren't just lost, they were deliberately led to this cove."

Woodrow's eyes widened with realization. "You mean to say this island is a trap? A place where ships are drawn to their doom?"

"Exactly," Indy replied, nodding. "And judging by these documents, someone has been orchestrating this for a long time."

As they continued their examination, a soft creak from outside made them freeze. The lantern's light flickered ominously as the distant sounds of laughter and music from McDonald's party carried through the night air. The revelry was a stark contrast to the grim discoveries they had unearthed. These maps had lead to so much misery for the sailors who followed them.

"Time to make a decision," Indy said decisively. "We need to get back to the bungalow before they notice we're gone. Tomorrow, we'll need to follow up on these leads and see if we can uncover who is behind

this operation."

Woodrow nodded, his face set with determination. "We can't let this opportunity slip away. There's too much at stake."

They made their way back to the bungalow, carefully retracing their steps to avoid detection. The night was thick with tension as they slipped through the shadows, their minds racing with the implications of what they had uncovered.

Back in their temporary quarters, Indy and Woodrow prepared for the next phase of their adventure. The cove's secrets were only the beginning of a larger mystery that promised to lead them through treacherous waters and into the heart of a shadowy conspiracy.

"The island holds more than we ever imagined," Indy said quietly as he packed their gear. "But we're one step closer to unraveling the truth."

Woodrow, his gaze fixed on the horizon, replied, "And we'll uncover it, no matter where it leads us. Tomorrow, we take the fight to those who've been hiding in the shadows."

As the first light of dawn broke over the horizon, Indy and Woodrow readied themselves for the challenges ahead. The island's enigmatic allure had transformed their quest into a high-stakes adventure, and

they were determined to see it through to the end together.

Chapter 11

Shadows in the Night

A raspy, barely audible voice cut through the dense night air. "Didn't you hear that noise?"

"Of course I heard it, you clumsy oaf!" retorted another, the tone as sharp and jarring as a tuba's brassy blare.

Both men, grumbling and muttering, cast about in the dim light, their eyes scanning the darkened landscape with mild curiosity. "Probably just a wild cat," one concluded with a dismissive shrug.

"Yeah, you might be right, boss. Can we get back to sleep now? Tomorrow's going to be a beast."

"Yeeeah... you might have a point there," the boss grumbled, his voice trailing off as they trudged back to their beds.

Hidden in the shadows, Woodrow Smith's teeth chattered with cold and anxiety. His heart raced in the chill of the night, racing with thoughts of the dire situation they were tangled in—running from danger, stumbling upon grim discoveries.

As the cabin door clicked shut behind the two grumbling guards, Indy sprang from his hiding spot like a spring-loaded trap. Woodrow, still trying to adjust to the night's chaos, looked up with weary eyes.

"So, Woody," Indy urged, his voice a low whisper of determination, "are you coming or are you going to sit here and let them find us come daybreak? You know, the first hint of morning and they'll be all over us. Move it, or you'll wish you had!"

Feeling the sting of Indy's words and spurred by the prospect of confronting those two thugs, Woodrow reluctantly rose. Was Indy ready to head back to Miami? He hoped so.

"Keep it quiet," Indy directed as they crept into the darkness. "We need to see if there are more cabins like these around. Stick to the shadows, and for heaven's sake, watch your step! If we make too much noise, our chances of escape will be toast."

Woodrow muttered under his breath, casting longing glances towards what he imagined would be a cozy bed with a hot water bottle, lovingly prepared by Cornelia. "Look," Indy whispered, pointing to a small cluster of buildings just ahead. "Looks like we've stumbled right into the middle of an anthill."

"Yeah," Woodrow grumbled, "and we're the ants. Careful you don't get squashed."

Indy smirked despite the danger. "We've been as busy as ants tonight. We can be proud of that, at least."

They continued their stealthy exploration. Indy's sharp eyes caught sight of a warehouse a short distance away, its silhouette looming ominously in the night. "What do you think?" Woodrow asked hesitantly.

Indy's expression was all business. "This is dangerous and reckless, but we didn't come this far to turn back now. Let's see what's inside."

Indy stacked three empty crates, then used them to reach a small window two meters off the ground. He peered inside, his lantern casting eerie shadows across the dark interior. "Just as I thought," Indy muttered. "This place is stuffed with more cocaine and heroin than my neighborhood pharmacy."

"But how does this connect to the boat graveyard?" Woodrow asked, bewildered.

"It's simple," Indy explained. "McDonald and his crew lure ships to the island. This has been going on for a long time, obviously. It is a big operation that needs crew. They're afraid someone will uncover their smuggling operation if they recruit. So they spread phony maps among seamen to attract treasure hunters who join them or…disappear. This island's mysterious reputation keeps the authorities off their trail."

Woodrow's face paled. "So what happens to the crew of these ships if they want to see their families

again?" His thoughts turned to Cornelia.

Indy's expression grew grim. "They either join the traffickers forever or they're eliminated."

"That's monstrous!" Woodrow gasped. "These men are animals!"

"Welcome to the twentieth century," Indy replied dryly. "And if McDonald's eyeing your seaplane, it's because he wants to speed up the drug smuggling part of his operation. The sooner he can move his product to Miami, the better for him."

Woodrow's face fell. "My God."

"Alright," Indy said, clapping Woodrow on the shoulder. "I'll find the lab, and we'll get the full picture. Stay put, and I'll be back before you know it."

Indy vanished into the night, his lantern a flickering beacon in the darkness. Left alone, Woodrow huddled against a tree, battling exhaustion and the eerie sounds of the jungle. He imagined snakes, spiders, and other dangers lurking in the darkness as he tried to sleep.

"Woody! Wake up!" Indy's voice pierced the stillness. "Get a move on! I've found the lab. We need to head back before dawn or we'll be caught."

Meanwhile, back on the mainland, Professor Henry

Jones was in a frenzy. Desperately, he confronted Commander Carter of the Coast Guard. "The Bermuda Triangle! You think that's what this is? Nonsense! My son and Woodrow are out there, and they could be in grave danger. I demand a search!"

Commander Carter, taken aback, stammered in response. "We want to help, Professor, but a storm is raging. We can't risk our men in these conditions."

Henry Jones clenched his fists, his face a mask of grim resolve. "I had high hopes for the Coast Guard, but I'm utterly disappointed. I'll be taking this matter up with the highest authorities. Good morning, Commander."

Herman, standing beside the professor, wept quietly. "We'll start the search ourselves if necessary," Henry declared. "No one will say I let my son die without doing everything in my power to save him."

Herman nodded through his tears. "I'll go with you, Professor. I can't just stand by and do nothing."

With a heavy heart and a resolute spirit, Henry Jones and Herman prepared for their own daring rescue mission. The storm raged on, but their determination blazed as fiercely as ever.

Chapter 12
The Gassed Gambit

"There's no time to waste, Herman," Professor Jones barked with a steely determination, his eyes flashing with a mix of urgency and resolve. "Igor Monblanc's reliable source pointed me to an old sea dog whose knowledge far surpasses those coastguard incompetents. And word has it that this sailor's debts are so monumental, my dollars will be more persuasive than any storm."

As rain pounded the streets of Miami Beach, casting an ominous gloom over the city, Professor Jones and his loyal but anxious companion, Herman, took their seats in a rickety old car, driven by none other than Igor Monblanc himself. The trio was bound for the residence of Jonas Melville, a mariner of considerable renown.

"I know the Bermuda Triangle better than I know my own backyard!" Jonas Melville roared with a hearty laugh as they arrived at his weather-beaten house. "You might not believe it, but I've navigated those treacherous waters over five hundred times! Even circumnavigated the globe solo!"

Professor Jones, ever the shrewd businessman, had his doubts about Melville's grandiose claims, but he played his cards close to his chest. His strategy was to appear disinterested, to avoid showing how much he valued Melville's supposed expertise. If he

seemed desperate, the old sailor would surely hike up his price.

"Solo around the world? That's a tall tale, old man," Jones countered with a dismissive wave of his hand. "Herman, let's not waste time with Melville. He's probably too busy with more important matters. Can you recommend someone else who'd be willing to accept two hundred dollars for a short trip?"

At this, Melville's face turned a shade paler as he dropped his pipe. "W-wait a minute, Professor," he stammered, his voice hoarse from years of tobacco. "I'll be your guide! I'll do it, no problem! But you better not be prone to seasickness. That storm's going to tear through the Straits of Florida in a few hours!"

Herman's already queasy stomach churned at the thought, and he began to question his decision to join the expedition. The storm had already begun to churn, its fury turning the Miami Belle, Melville's battered three-masted hybrid motorboat, into a plaything of the ocean's wrath. Waves crashed over the deck as the wind howled like a wounded beast.

Strapped into his life-jacket and clinging desperately to the rear mast, Herman's face was a mask of greenish discomfort. He had thought it wise to gorge himself before setting sail, fearing he might not eat again if the storm wrecked their vessel. The result of this ill-fated decision was now a cacophony of retch-

ing noises and misery.

"Hey, cabin boy!" Melville's gruff voice cut through the gale. "Don't puke up on my boat! Lean over the side if you have to!"

Herman complied, nearly tumbling into the abyss as Professor Jones grabbed him just in time. The professor's own stomach was twisting in knots, though he managed to remain silent, his thoughts on the perils of the open sea.

"You see?" Melville bellowed over the storm, puffing his pipe as if he were a steam engine. "This ain't no pleasure cruise, but the Miami Belle's as solid as a rock, and old Jonas knows his stuff. Don't worry, we'll find the seaplane. They would have taken the straightest path across the strait. If we're lucky, we'll spot it before the storm's over."

"How long will this tempest rage?" shouted Professor Jones, bracing against the violent rocking of the boat.

"Two hours? Four? Six?" Melville shrugged, grinning through the chaos. "Who knows? But it'll calm down eventually."

With nothing else to do but endure the storm's fury, Professor Jones resigned himself to the ordeal, his thoughts drifting to the safety of his son, Henry, and the fate of their mission.

Meanwhile, on the enigmatic island, Indy and Woodrow were rudely awoken by Captain McDonald, who was fresh and eager after a night of revelry. "Morning, gents!" McDonald declared with a broad grin. "Today's my solo flight. I'll be taking your seaplane for a spin and be back by nightfall."

Woodrow's heart skipped a beat at the captain's reckless bravado. "Without me? You're planning to go alone?"

A heavy hand landed on Woodrow's shoulder. Roberto, ever the enforcer, leaned in menacingly. "Looks like you're staying here, kid."

McDonald's laughter boomed like thunder. "Ha! Ha! Ha! You've got spirit, I'll give you that! I'm aiming to set a record by flying straight to Miami without a hitch. Just make sure you keep quiet when I return. Don't want any official reports, do we?"

Woodrow's eyes widened in disbelief. "You plan to cross the Florida Straits alone after just one lesson? Have you lost your mind?"

McDonald's laughter was a harsh, mocking sound. "Don't be daft! That wasn't my first lesson. I've got plenty of flying experience. I just wanted to give your seaplane a test. Now, enjoy your day. You might want to take a swim or try your luck fishing, sharks are about today!"

As the captain strode towards The Sea Hawk, Woodrow's heart sank. The realization that McDonald was no novice pilot hit him hard. How could he have been so blind?

A comforting hand squeezed Woodrow's shoulder. Indy, ever the reassuring presence, leaned in close. "Don't worry about your plane. McDonald's a competent pilot. I saw him in action this morning. And don't let your worries get the best of you. Remember, it's easier to deceive than to be deceived."

Woodrow managed a weak smile at Indy's words. "I didn't expect McDonald to be so experienced. But I've taken precautions. After our flying lesson, I went back for my glasses and tampered with the fuel. I'd be surprised if he makes it to Miami."

Indy's eyes sparkled with admiration. "Now that's the spirit! Let's see how this gamble plays out."

Chapter 13

The Ghost of Joshua Slocum

"Bravo! I say, bravo!" Indy quietly exclaimed, patting Woodrow on the back. His eyes gleamed with excitement. "Dear Woody, you never cease to surprise me! But why didn't you tell me about this plan?"

Woodrow grinned sheepishly. "Well... I wasn't sure it was such a great idea," he admitted, the humility of a hero in his voice.

"Perfect! Now that we've dealt with McDonald, I say we take care of his goons."

"And how exactly are you planning to do that?" Woodrow asked, raising an eyebrow in doubt.

"Just watch," Indy said, flashing a mischievous smile.

As if on cue, Roberto, their burly captor, sauntered over. Indy approached him with his head hanging low, speaking in a casual tone.

"We'd like to take up Captain McDonald's offer," he said nonchalantly. "Go fishing. There must be coves around here filled with fish, right? Woody and I are just itching to catch some parrot fish. Right, Woody?"

The massive man narrowed his eyes, suspicious, but couldn't quite figure out Indy's angle. Then, as if

some dim lightbulb clicked on in his mind, a slow smile crept across his leathery face.

"I'll go with you," he said, using his favorite word. "There."

That simple word, uttered like a charm, seemed to carry some profound significance for Roberto. He used it at every turn, as if it were his own personal "open sesame" to solve all the world's problems.

Indy feigned disgust. "If you insist... fine. Where can we find the supplies?"

With a grunt, Roberto pointed a thick finger toward a dilapidated shack some distance away.

"There," he said, his tone as serious as a judge pronouncing a sentence.

"Much obliged," Indy replied, flashing a forced smile. "We're very grateful."

Fifteen minutes later, Indy and Woodrow stood on the beach, each holding a fishing rod. Roberto watched them with a knowing smirk.

"Tonight," Indy said, grinning, "we'll feast on the fruits of our labor."

Roberto's smirk widened. Leading them down the shore, he took them to a secluded cove, far from the

ship graveyard they had seen earlier.

"There," he said again, his arm sweeping over the water, as if daring them to prove their fishing prowess.

Indy picked up on the signal. "You remember how to cast, right, Woody?" he asked with a playful wink.

Woodrow stared at him, wide-eyed like an owl. "Uh... sure... of course!" he stammered.

Indy reached into his wicker basket, rummaging around before pulling out his hand with a shake of his head.

"Roberto, my friend, it seems you've forgotten something crucial," Indy said, tapping the side of his head as if imparting a great secret. "The bait. Without it, no fish will be the least bit interested. That's Fishing 101."

Roberto's smile faltered. He sensed a trap, but couldn't quite place it. What could these two really do to him? With a shrug, he crouched down and began scratching the sand in search of worms.

Indy pounced. With the swift flick of a wrist, he whipped his fishing line towards Roberto's face and yanked back hard. The brute gasped, then realized he had a fish hook through his nostril. His hands flew up to his face, Indy kicked the back of his knee,

bringing the giant to the ground. Woody and Indy held him down with their weight.

"Sorry, Roberto," Indy said coolly. "We liked you, but we've got a mission to complete."

"Yeah, sorry, big guy," Woodrow added, unable to suppress a grin.

In one fluid motion, Indy cut a length of rope from his belt and bound Roberto's wrists and ankles. He even used the man's own scarf as a gag, ensuring their captive wouldn't raise the alarm.

"Indy, you're incredible!" Woodrow whispered, eyes sparkling with admiration.

Indy shrugged. "Thanks, but we're not out of this yet. Let's move!"

Navigating through the dense jungle in daylight was much easier, and soon enough, they reached the boat graveyard. Their destination, the laboratory.

Strangely, not a single soul was in sight.

"Where's everyone gone?" Woodrow muttered.

"Probably overseeing the coca and poppy fields," Indy replied. "McDonald needs to keep those prisoners harvesting, after all."

Woodrow shivered at the thought. If Indy's plan failed, he could easily see himself toiling in the fields, just another prisoner.

They reached the laboratory. Indy peered through a crack in the door and froze.

"Not a word, Woody. Someone's inside."

Crouching low, Indy crept forward, slipping through the slightly ajar door. The room reeked of chemicals, a sour, unripe stench hanging heavy in the air. At a table, a man hunched over test tubes, completely oblivious to their presence.

Indy motioned for Woodrow to follow, but as the chemist turned, Woodrow barely stifled a gasp. The man's face was gaunt, ragged, like a living ghost. His eyes were hollow, mechanical as he continued his work.

Indy made the first move, stepping into view. The chemist recoiled, covering his head with his hands.

"Please! I'll finish tonight! Just don't hit me! I can't think when you hit me!"

Indy and Woodrow exchanged stunned glances. Indy crouched low, speaking gently. "We're not here to hurt you. We're trapped here too. Captain McDonald took our seaplane. My name's Indiana Jones, and this is Woodrow Smith."

"New to the island?" The chemist's dead eyes flickered with a faint glimmer of recognition.

"I'm Joshua Slocum," he whispered.

Woodrow's jaw dropped. "The" Joshua Slocum? The man who sailed around the world solo and disappeared in the Bermuda Triangle?"

Slocum let out a hollow laugh. "That's what they think? That I vanished in the Triangle? Fools! No, I was captured, enslaved by these criminals. Forced to make their tinctures."

Suddenly, his expression darkened. "Do you hear that? Bouvier and his goons. They'll beat me if I don't finish. Please, go! Hide!"

Indy and Woodrow didn't need telling twice. They ducked into a nearby office just as the heavy footsteps of Bouvier and his men echoed toward the lab.

Chapter 14

Mysterious Solution

The storm had finally subsided in the middle of the Florida Straits, leaving Jonas Melville's two passengers looking a bit less green. The sea was calm now, and the sun beat down from the clear sky with the intensity expected in these latitudes.

"Grr..." Jonas puffed on his pipe, squinting at the horizon. "We got lucky this time. The rest of the trip should be smooth sailin'. At least the engine's with us now."

"I hope so," Henry Jones replied, his voice thick with a head cold. "I'm on the verge of pneumonia..."

"And me too!" Herman added, his nose red from constant blowing. "I've never been so sick in my whole life. This is miserable!"

Jonas chuckled. "Ah, lads! This is what it's like for us men of the sea. Our women fret their days away at the docks, waitin' for us to return!"

"I can understand that," Henry muttered gloomily. "I've been waiting for my son for two days now, and it's not a pleasant feeling!"

Jonas drew deeply on his pipe and nodded sympathetically. "Don't worry. My guess is their seaplane made an unplanned stop somewhere between Miami

and the Bahamas. It's probably floatin' out there like a nutshell in the middle of the ocean."

"And poor Junior must be starving and freezing," Henry lamented.

"Don't be so pessimistic!" Jonas growled, as he engaged the Miami Belle's engine.

Suddenly, a strange noise cut through the air. A distant hum, like a swarm of bees headed straight for them. It was the unmistakable sound of a plane's engine sputtering. Jonas' sharp eyes scanned the horizon, and sure enough, a small black dot appeared low in the sky.

"Looks like someone's in trouble," Jonas muttered, his weathered face breaking into a grin. "That's not just any plane, it's a seaplane, and it's runnin' out of fuel fast!"

Professor Jones and Herman exchanged glances of hope and dread as the plane began its descent, its engine coughing and wheezing. The pilot seemed to have control, but the approach was too fast. If he didn't pull up soon, the landing would be catastrophic.

"Good heavens!" Henry gasped, closing his eyes as if he couldn't bear to watch. "Please, don't let it be..."

With a last burst of power, the seaplane's engine roared back to life just long enough for the pilot to lift the nose and skim safely onto the water. The plane bobbed gently on the waves, its name painted boldly on the side. It was their plane.

"Indy! Woodrow!" Henry and Herman shouted together, recognizing the plane immediately. "They're alive! God be praised!"

They danced with joy, their exuberance causing the Miami Belle to rock dangerously.

"Easy, lads! You'll have us all overboard!" Jonas barked, steadying the boat.

But the celebration didn't last long. Neither Indy nor Woodrow emerged from the seaplane. Instead, a stranger climbed out, waving for assistance.

"Hey, you on the boat!" the man called, smiling broadly. "Looks like I've run into a bit of trouble. Could you give me a lift to the Bahamas?"

Henry's joy turned to suspicion. "Who is this fellow?" he muttered. "And where are Indy and Woodrow?"

Jonas raised a hand to silence him. "Let me handle this."

As the Miami Belle approached the drifting seaplane,

Jonas studied the man carefully. He was tall and lean, with a cocky smile that didn't quite reach his eyes.

"Hello there!" the stranger called. "I'm lucky you came along! I'm Woodrow Smith, an aviator in distress."

"Woodrow Smith?" Henry blurted out, incredulous.

Jonas stepped in quickly. "Pardon my cousin," he said smoothly. "He's a bit hard of hearing. My name's Jonas Melville."

"Nice to meet you," the man said, shaking Jonas' hand. "No, I don't think I've heard of you."

Jonas gave a quick nod to Henry, signaling him to play along. Reluctantly, Henry shook the stranger's hand as well.

"Well, Mr. Smith," Jonas said, eyeing him shrewdly. "What brings you out here?"

"I just crossed the Florida Straits non-stop," the man boasted, "but I ran into trouble near an uninhabited island. I was trying to make the return trip when I ran out of fuel."

Henry's suspicion deepened, but before he could speak, Jonas cut him off. "How about a drink of rum to steady your nerves?" he offered, pulling out a bottle.

The stranger's smile widened. "With pleasure."

But as Jonas pretended to pour, Henry's eyes narrowed. "By God!" he suddenly cried. "Your seaplane! Look!"

The man spun around in alarm, and in that instant, Henry swung the bottle and cracked it over the stranger's head. He crumpled to the deck, unconscious.

"Well done!" Jonas laughed. "I wouldn't have thought to use our last bottle of rum, but it did the trick."

Henry, still catching his breath, glanced down at the unconscious man. "Who is this impostor? Where are Indy and Woodrow?"

Jonas puffed on his pipe, eyes twinkling. "This man is Walter McDonald, a notorious local smuggler. I've crossed paths with his crew before."

Henry paled. "A pirate smuggler? But how did he get Woodrow's seaplane?"

"I suspect Indy and Woodrow landed on that uncharted island McDonald mentioned. They must've crossed paths with him, and he took their plane."

"And McDonald planned to use the seaplane to

move his goods," Henry said, horrified.

Jonas nodded. "Exactly. And I have a feeling this island holds more than just our missing friends. I think we're about to solve the mystery of the Bermuda Triangle... and the disappearance of some dear friends."

Chapter 15

Promises, promises...

McDonald hadn't gotten far with The Sea Hawk, so it wasn't long before Jonas, the professor, and Herman found themselves nearing an island.

"I can't say with absolute certainty," Jonas rasped, squinting into the distance, "but my gut tells me we're close." His grizzled face, weathered by years at sea, betrayed no doubt.

"I pray to heaven you're right," Professor Jones mumbled between sneezes, his handkerchief damp from constant use.

"If we find Indy alive, I'll do whatever he tells me. No complaints!" Herman vowed, puffing out his chest, though anyone who knew him knew promises like that were as fleeting as the circumstances in any crisis.

Jonas, ever the old salt, raised his brass telescope, scanning the shoreline for danger. Once satisfied, he snapped it shut and tacked hard to catch the wind.

"If anyone's watching us," he said, his pipe clenched between his teeth, "they won't get a good look. The mainsail hides us. I'll dock far from the main beach. It'll give us a better shot at sneaking ashore unnoticed."

As they drifted toward a secluded cove, the silence hung heavy, broken only by the soft slap of waves against the hull. Twenty minutes later, the Miami Belle slid into the small bay without a hitch.

"That's strange…" Professor Jones muttered, disembarking and eyeing the shore. "Look there. Two fishing rods abandoned, and a satchel…" His brow furrowed.

Jonas's eyes narrowed as he spotted something more unsettling. "Not just fishing gear, professor," he growled. "There's a man... tied up, hand and foot. Looks like there was trouble here."

Jones and Herman stared in shock as the prone figure lay, motionless.

"Well, that solves two mysteries. First, this island isn't as deserted as we feared. And second, we've found McDonald's hideaway," Jonas said, spitting over the side of the boat.

"How can you be so sure?" the professor asked, fumbling with his spectacles, his face pale.

Jonas let the suspense build for a heartbeat before answering. "Because I know that man over there. His name's Roberto Malaver."

"You... you know him?" Jones stammered.

"Damn right I do," Jonas replied with a steely glint in his eye. "He's McDonald's right-hand man. He tried to sell me a treasure map once, asked if I'd haul some illegal cargo as we looked for the treasure. I turned him down. But looks like he's still up to his dirty tricks."

"But these two won't cause us any more trouble, will they?" Professor Jones said, relief creeping into his voice as he peered at the bound figure.

"Don't get too comfortable, professor," Jonas shot back. "McDonald's got a whole crew, at least twenty men. They could be hiding anywhere on this cursed rock. Help me drag Malaver and McDonald into the brush. We can't risk leaving them out in the open."

Together, the trio hoisted the unconscious men into a nearby thicket, covering them with branches and foliage. Once their work was done, Jonas wiped his hands on his trousers and gave a nod.

"Now," he said, the edge of adventure sharpening his tone, "let's find Indy and Woodrow."

Meanwhile, deep inside the island's makeshift laboratory, Indy and Woodrow lay hidden beneath a rusted desk, their hearts pounding as Bouvier, McDonald's brutish lieutenant, stormed into the room, flanked by two cronies.

“Slocum! Where are you, you greasy sack of bones?” Bouvier bellowed, his voice echoing off the laboratory’s sterile walls.

A trembling figure emerged from the shadows, Slocum, the island’s unwilling resident chemist, sweat beading on his brow. “I’m… I’m almost done with the batch. Ready soon, I promise,” he stammered, clutching a beaker like it was his last hope.

“It better be,” Bouvier sneered, his lip curling. “The boss’ll be back any minute, and he’s expecting a delivery tomorrow.”

Indy, hidden just feet away, shot Woodrow a sharp look, the kind that said “we’re in deep now.” Woodrow’s face went pale as a ghost.

“I’ve got an idea,” Indy whispered, his breath barely a whisper. “Those two muscle-heads are Bouvier’s main lackeys. We take them down, we cripple their operation.”

“Take them down?” Woodrow hissed, incredulous. “You got a death wish, kid? How exactly do you plan to do that?”

“Simple,” Indy said, his eyes gleaming. “We wait till they get comfortable, probably drinking and playing cards. Then we strike.”

Before Woodrow could protest, the two men crept toward Slocum, who was hunched over his equipment again, his hands shaking.

"Mr. Slocum?" Indy whispered. "We're here to help."

The old man turned slowly, his eyes glassy with desperation. "Help? There's no help here, boy. Four years I've been stuck on this damned island. Four years under McDonald's thumb."

"We can get you out," Indy pressed. "But you have to help us. You know this island. You know Bouvier and his men."

Slocum shook his head, his voice thick with defeat. "You don't understand, boy. They'll hunt me down if I try to escape. Every time I've tried… the punishment… it's worse."

"Not this time," Indy said firmly. "This time, you're not alone. We've got a plan. But we need to take out Bouvier and his goons first. We've got to catch them off guard."

Slocum's eyes flickered with a glimmer of hope, long buried but not extinguished. He hesitated, then nodded slowly. "There's a net behind the lab," he said in a low voice. "Big enough to trap a couple of wild dogs, or men, if you're lucky. Stretch it between two trees and lure those bastards underneath."

Indy's lips curled into a grin. "That'll do just fine. Let's show these thugs they picked the wrong island."

Chapter 16

Deliverance

No sooner had the unfortunate Slocum uttered these words than he collapsed, lifeless.

"My God!" Woodrow exclaimed in terror.

"We can't do anything for him," Indy replied grimly. "At least not right now. Let's set the trap."

Without making a sound, Indy and Woodrow slipped out of the laboratory and located the net Slocum had mentioned, drying in the late afternoon sun. He stuffed a few vials of various chemicals in his pocket, thinking if he needed to start a fire later they might help.

"Slocum was right," Indy murmured. "Here's the plan..."

He quickly explained his idea to Woodrow, who would have given anything to be far away from the events about to unfold.

Each of them perched in a tree, holding the net in their hands. Below, they spotted the cabin where McDonald's henchmen were deeply engrossed in a game of cards. The challenge was to coax all the men, including the terrifying Bouvier, into positioning themselves under the net and remaining still long enough for it to fall on them.

Indy had devised what he believed was a foolproof plan.

"Perfect, Woody," Indy whispered from his tree. "I can't see you at all in the leaves."

"Nor I you," Woodrow responded. "Are you ready?"

"Whenever you are..."

"Alright, here goes..."

Woodrow began mimicking the cry of a wild cat, with surprising skill. The reaction was immediate. Bouvier stormed out of the cabin, gun in hand, ready to shoot.

BANG! BANG! Two gunshots rang out.

"Meeeeooooowwwwww!" came a mournful sound, followed by a heavy thud, as though something had fallen.

"Well, well! Sounds like I got the damned thing!" Bouvier roared, thumping his chest. "That makes me thirsty! What do you say, moron?" he shouted at his weasel-faced companion. "Fill my glass, then go fetch that beast's corpse so I can admire my handi-work."

The man, without hesitation, filled Bouvier's glass

and then set off to retrieve the supposed wildcat.

"Meeeooooowwwww!" he heard again as he neared the trees, freezing in place. Moments later, Bouvier appeared, foaming with rage, his eyes bloodshot.

"Where is it? Where's that thing so I can finish it off properly?"

Bouvier began running around, desperate to put another bullet in the elusive creature.

"Come on, all of you!" he barked at his men. "No more card games until I have that hide as a trophy!"

Ten men grumbled but emerged from the cabin, following Bouvier's lead toward the trees.

From their vantage point, Indy and Woodrow held their breath, watching the men position themselves beneath the net, oblivious to the trap above them. One man was missing, however, the most dangerous of them all, Bouvier himself, who had hung back.

"I see it, boss!" the weasel-faced man shouted, staring straight at Indy through the foliage.

"Hold still, big nose. I'm coming!" Bouvier growled. "Don't move, or I'll gut you!"

A moment later, Bouvier stood directly beneath Indy, pointing the barrel of his rifle at him.

"NOW!" Indy yelled.

The net dropped like a swooping eagle, ensnaring the men in a tangle of ropes. They thrashed and struggled, only tightening the net's grip on them.

"Nice work, Woody! Time for the second part of the plan!" Indy called as the two of them scrambled down from the trees and rushed into the cabin. As Indy had anticipated, most of the men had left their weapons behind.

"Here, catch!" Indy tossed a gun to Woodrow, who, in a panic, caught it briefly before letting it fall to the floor in fear.

As the gun hit the ground, it discharged, sending bullets ricocheting wildly. Indy and Woodrow barely had time to leap onto a chair as the shots spun the gun in a deadly circle.

"Did you hear that?" Jonas Melville, a few hundred meters away, said, turning to his companions. "That was a machine gun. We need to be careful. These thugs aren't messing around!"

Half-reassured, Professor Jones and Herman followed closely behind.

"Stick to this path," Jonas instructed. "We need to find where those shots came from, but keep your

heads down. We don't want to be spotted."

"We promise!" Herman and Jones replied in unison.

After about two hundred meters, they entered a sunlit clearing. The sight that greeted them filled them with relief and joy and bewilderment. Indy and Woodrow had successfully trapped a dozen struggling men in a net. The boat crew all felt like they had walked into a moving picture.

"INDY!" Herman shouted.

"JUNIOR!" added Professor Jones, running toward his son.

"Dad! Hermie!" Indy cried, the reunion as jubilant as it was overdue.

But Indy was the first to pull himself together. "In the lab! Slocum!" he shouted to Jonas. "He's in bad shape!"

Jonas Melville dashed into the dilapidated laboratory, finding Joshua Slocum still lying on the floor, unconscious. Kneeling by his old friend, Jonas shook him with all his might.

"Joshua! Joshua! It's me!"

Slowly, Slocum opened his glassy eyes, his pupils dilated and unfocused.

"Joshua, I thought you were dead," Jonas whispered, tears in his eyes. "But when McDonald mentioned this island, I had a feeling you might be here, forced to work for them. Tell me it's not true…"

Slocum painfully shook his head. With Jonas's help, he sat up and managed to speak.

"I'm afraid... it's true," Slocum rasped. "During my travels... South America, India... I learned too much. When they captured me, they gave me a choice... explain how to grow coca and opium here, or die. I had no choice but to comply... and they forced me to test their drugs on myself. Now I'm hooked... a slave to this poison."

Tears streamed down his withered face. "I'm nothing now... just a broken man."

"Don't say that!" Jonas insisted. "We're getting you out of here, and right now! McDonald and his goons are finished."

But as Jonas helped Slocum toward the door, they were met with a horrifying sight. Bouvier and his henchmen had escaped the net, now holding Indy, Woodrow, Professor Jones, and Herman at gunpoint.

McDonald stepped forward, grinning wickedly. "Well, well! Look who we have here! Thanks for bringing me back to my island, Jonas. But I'm afraid

your services are no longer required! Ha! Ha! Ha!”

Chapter 17

Wings and Fins

McDonald, grinning ear to ear with malevolent satisfaction, turned to his captives.
"As I told your friends Indiana Jones and Woodrow Smith earlier, the sharks are out today. Perhaps you'd like to say hello? Oh, and don't worry about your seaplane, Mr. Smith. We'll retrieve it and give it a fresh coat of paint, it will be unrecognizable. Everyone will believe you all vanished in the Bermuda Triangle... Ha! Ha! Ha!"

Herman was shaking uncontrollably. Professor Jones trembled with fury, while only Indy seemed resigned to his fate, contemplating his doom.

"I've already said my last prayers twice," Indy thought, "but they say things come in threes..." He didn't give up hope entirely, still searching for a way to escape.

McDonald brought his prisoners aboard the Mary Celeste, with Roberto at the helm and the rest of his henchmen keeping a tight hold on the captives. Indy racked his brain for a plan but found none. They were heading straight into a nightmare.

"People say Hell is an awful place to spend eternity" Professor Jones muttered to McDonald.

"I couldn't care less about your heaven or hell, Pro-

fessor," McDonald sneered. "For me, heaven is here on Earth. I don't care what happens after I'm gone. What matters is that I'm alive now. Unfortunately for you, you won't be able to say that much longer. Mathias, give the sharks a taste, would you?"

As McDonald boasted about his evil victory to the professor Indy realized he was out of sight enough to wiggle two vials out of his pocket.

One of the sailors grabbed a bucket of chum and dumped it into the sea. Indy took advantage of the noise to strategically drop the now-open vials one by one through slats into the dock into the water. Indy knew how sensitive shark noses were. The stink of those noxious chemicals might help odds.

"Nothing like blood to lure them in," the captain of the Mary Celeste said. "Now then, my friends, which of you wants to go first?"

"N-n-no... I w-want to g-go back to U-Utah..." Herman stammered, pale as a ghost.

"Oh, don't worry," McDonald jeered. "You'll go back to Utah in your next life."

"You're a monster!" Professor Jones raged, shaking a fist. "But you won't escape justice forever. You'll pay for your crimes!"

McDonald, unfazed by the threats, waved his hand

dismissively.
"Gentlemen, enjoy your swim. After our entertainment I hope to never see you again."

The six prisoners were tossed into the waves one after another. Already, what looked like shark fins could be seen cutting through the water in the distance.

"I always ate too much, and now I guess it's me who'll be eaten," Herman mumbled, his face twisted with fear.

"Shut up and swim!" Indy barked. "We haven't been eaten yet. And these sharks might not even be man-eaters."

But their hopes were quickly dashed as seven fins closed in, encircling them.

"It would take a miracle to save us now," Woodrow said, resigned. "So, if any of you survive, please tell Cornelia I loved her."

"Really, you're all a bunch of pessimists," Jonas Melville grumbled. "If you'd open your eyes and ears instead of wallowing in despair, you'd hear the Coast Guard's flagship approaching. And by the way, those aren't sharks circling us, they're dolphins! And I've never heard of a man-eating dolphin."

"D-d-dolphins?" Herman stammered.

"Yes, young man, dolphins! They think we're hurt and are coming to help." Jonus laughed.

At that moment, a dolphin's head broke the surface, as if greeting the stranded group. The mood shifted from dread to astonishment.

"But how did the Coast Guard find us so fast?" Indy asked.

"When your father reported your disappearance," Jonas explained, "they promised to start searching once the storm passed. Since I knew they'd probably find your plane abandoned at sea, I left a note on one of the seats with the coordinates of the island McDonald mentioned."

"My seaplane? My trick worked!" Woodrow exclaimed, his optimism restored. "Good things come in twos, right? Who called me a pessimist?"

Minutes later, the Coast Guard's flagship pulled up beside the six swimmers. They were hauled aboard, soaking wet but alive. Commander Carter immediately set off in pursuit of the Mary Celeste.

"Nicely done, gentlemen!" Henry Jones said with a satisfied grin, though Commander Carter, still remembering the professor's earlier criticism, only glowered in return.

"Hmm, I'll be sure to report to Washington how well you handled this case, Commander," Jones continued awkwardly. "Yes... yes, I'll be sure to do that. It's the least we can do..."

With the help of a second Coast Guard ship, the *Mary Celeste* was quickly intercepted. McDonald and his men surrendered without resistance.

"We'll need to destroy the coca and poppy fields," the commander said, shaking his head and exhaling a long drag from a cigarette. "People should only be able to purchase cocaine and heroin from a licensed neighborhood pharmacist. We've long suspected McDonald was involved in the drug trade, but we never had solid proof. Now we do. My only regret is that we couldn't rescue Mr. Slocum sooner. I hope he recovers from his addiction."

"He can count on me for support," Jonas Melville vowed. "I'll look after him." He pulled out his pipe, still full of seawater, and clenched it in his teeth.

Epilogue

The Final Reckoning

"It's them! It's them!" Cornelia Postlethwaite yelped, peering through the telescope from the Coast Guard station. "They're safe! This is a miracle!"

"I do not believe it!" echoed Norma Bellini, the Italian nightingale. "Our helpless suffering is coming to an end!"

A horde of journalists swarmed below, buzzing with excitement. Woodrow Smith's daring feat and the capture of McDonald's notorious gang were sure to dominate the headlines.

As the heroes disembarked, they were engulfed by the throng.

"Gentlemen! Please, let us through!" Commander Carter barked. "We've got a patient with us!"

"Slocum!" one reporter shouted. "It's Joshua Slocum! Rescued from the Bermuda Triangle!"

The frenzy surged, but after what seemed like hours, Indy and Woodrow finally made their way to Norma and Cornelia. Cornelia's eyes sparkled as she rushed toward Woodrow, her voice full of passion.

"Oh, my darling! I love you! You're the man I've always wanted! This time, I've decided, I'm going to

marry you!"

Woodrow could barely catch his breath, overwhelmed by Cornelia's declaration. But before he could even respond, a man with graying hair stepped forward and handed him a crisp sheet of paper.

"Mr. Woodrow Smith, I'm George Wilfred Barrow," the man said with a broad smile. "I represent the developers of the first commercial airline between St. Petersburg and Tampa, Florida. It would be an honor to offer you a position as one of our pilots. Here's your contract, you just need to sign."

Overcome with emotion, Woodrow nearly swooned. For Indy and Norma, though, the world seemed to fade away as their eyes remained locked on each other.

Even Professor Jones, still weary from the ordeal, cracked a rare smile.

Then, breaking the spell, a familiar voice chimed in from the crowd, "When do we eat?"

With a laugh, the adventure came to a close. The dangers had passed, but the memories of courage, love, and friendship would last forever. For now, the heroes were ready for some well-deserved rest... and maybe a good meal.

Translator's Notes

The very first note is that this is the second time this book has been translated. If you are looking to read a translation that is more exacting to the original, seek that one out. Icybro, thanks so much!

This is my fifth one from this series translated and edited. The original translation of this book was an inspiraiton to me, as it mentions Al Capone in the opening. That made me aware of the inconsistency between Indiana meeting Capone twice in the wider story, but not knowing each other the second time. That is why when I translated Indiana Jones jr et Le Metropolian Violin I made it so they always use nicknames and never learn each other's real names.

The mention of Al Capone in this book is why I felt I had to translate it myself. Now Indiana and Herman just reflect on meeting gangsters. Snorky is an actual nickname Al Capone used and liked. I added other details for readers entertainment and to make the overall book read more cleanly.